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HOW CHARLIE BLAKE WENT IN FOR THE HEIRESS.



HAVE you ever had a bosom friend? By that I don't mean only one on whom you bestow that cheap article called your confidence, but one to whom a half (and the biggest) of the loaf belongs, while a loaf is there; who has the key of your cellar, even though you have arrived at your last dozen; who in short may put his hand into your

purse, take out the last shilling, and give you the change.

Such friends were Charlie Blake and I. We had been on the same side in all our games at school. We had shared alike in tender years our marbles and our half-yearly boxes from home, and if Charlie was bottom of his class, I was sure to be found 'next boy.' Together we

had struggled through Smalls, and conquered Mods; and emerged at the same time from under the shadow of our old college walls, and come together to the Temple (that emporium for younger sons), and gone on struggling for some two or three years at the time of which I write. It might be that deluded relatives had discovered in Charlie and me the germs of undeveloped Eldons, but alas! briefless barristers we were, even though the down on our cheeks (or rather on Charlie's, for I am a smooth man) had ripened long ago, and grown into dense forests of hair, and briefless we seemed likely to remain. I don't think Charlie and I should have fretted that the world in general did not look upon our genius with a mother's eye, only we were hard up—very hard up—so hard up, in short, that of course bulky papers came to us day by day which decidedly were cheques upon nobody's bank, but only very useless appeals for us to give what we had not got.

So Charlie and I had determined to look matters in the face, and see what could be done. Charlie was leaning on my mantelpiece, surveying the fit of his coat, and the length of his whiskers in my mirror, on the day we had come to this determination, while I was in my easiest attitude on one of my easiest chairs, with as good an Havannah as Turk or Christian need wish to smoke, in my mouth—for, as Charlie wisely observed, if one couldn't pay for anything, why shouldn't one have the best?

Pay! why we had given over even thinking of paying for some time. Did we not know that had we given a free entrée to our rooms, and been left with what only lawfully belonged to us, we should have presented a very primitive appearance indeed. N.B. I know Charlie had a pair of slippers worked by a cousin; I don't remember anything else. How could we help it? The world would shake us by the hand in an unpaid-for coat, but how would it look if we were strictly honest, and had no coat at all. Query?

'I had rather not sweep a cross-

ing, Arthur,' quoth Charlie; 'for a B.A. it isn't dignified; or even go to the diggings, which some of my countrymen would hardly permit me to do at present—and yet we can't hold on much longer.'

Then Charlie's feelings burst through his waistcoat and came forth in a sweeping anathema against bills, and the rascals who sent them, and the unsatisfactory state of the world in general to briefless barristers, as is the fashion with Oxford men with large views and no income.

'My good fellow,' I observed, throwing away the end of my cigar, 'let us look at the matter in a business-like point of view. Statement of the case: Two worthy gentlemen possessing—.' I paused—for what did we possess?

'Possessing every advantage except those to be derived from filthy lucre—can't get their creditors to credit 'em any longer,' observed Charlie.

'Under which trying and unaccountable circumstance, the second point in view is—what are they to do?'

Men have been known to attempt a joke on their way to the scaffold, but depend upon it the first sight of the cord puts a stop to it.

Charlie looked grave—so did I. My havannah was done, and there were only two more left in the box.

'The governor has seven babes and sucklings to provide for, and yours as many more: no chance in that quarter,' murmured Charlie.

N.B. Our forefathers were popularly supposed to have held landed estates somewhere in some bypast time—a belief their descendants held to, on the principle, "Tis better to have had and lost, than never to have had at all.'

Suddenly Charlie, who had been pensively stroking out his moustachios, was roused by the following remark from myself—'Charlie, couldn't we marry?'

Charlie suspended his operation—'Marry,' he said, vaguely—'what? whom?'

'Why, a woman who is not only a woman, but an heiress.'

'But where do they grow?' said

Charlie. 'It strikes me golden apples are not to be had without presenting a testimonial to the dragon; besides I've a polite objection to heiresses. They have generally large mouths, haven't they?' he added, plaintively. 'However,' he continued, 'I suppose one sacrifice is sufficient, so *you* may have her, and I'll dance at the wedding, with a pocket full of chinking gold.'

'After I have come over the dragon.'

'Precisely,' said Charlie. 'You wouldn't expose my tender frame to the monster; besides, you know, you will have the golden hen all your life—only giving me an egg now and then. But she mayn't like you.'

'Then she'll like you, which doubtless you consider far more likely.'

'Chacun à son goût,' Charlie observed; 'if I prefer myself, it doesn't hurt you. But seriously, Arthur, if there's a chance of my having to engage the young person's affections, I don't like it. Hasn't anybody got a maiden aunt? I possess a mourning ring as a mark of respect from mine—but isn't there some old spinster bottled up in your family, Arthur?'

'Yes, there was such an "old spinner," in the north of Scotland, whom I hadn't seen since I was a child in petticoats. She had petted me then, but, owing to some feud with my father, all intercourse between us had ceased even before my mother's death. Was she accessible?'

'North of Scotland,' quoth Charlie, 'very good indeed. "Loved you when a boy," ably worked by a pleader like you—it is just the thing. "North of Scotland," has she any salmon up at her place? By Jove! I feel 'em bite already. We are as safe as trivets.'

I can't say I exactly shared Charlie's exhilaration: but then I was Blondin, and had the rope to cross, while Charlie was safe below; and if I fell, though he might sympathise, he would not feel the bruises; and, depend upon it, feeling the bruises on your own person, and feeling for that person, are two very different things indeed. However, our present life of retirement was

not pleasant—to say the least, so I commenced operations by writing to my relative. It is needless now to write that letter again. There are so many excellent jokes one makes to oneself, after the party is over and one can't rouse the house to tell them—so many moves the spectator of a game at chess feels he could make, which are neglected. At the time, however, I considered my letter a very fair sample of its class—from a man who had kissed that celebrated Irish stone at Blarney Castle. The letter was posted by our own hands, after dusk, and a bottle of champagne drunk to its success.

'I want some dress bags,' said Charlie to me that evening; 'shall I order them?'

I muttered something to the effect that it is inexpedient to reckon the number of your brood till your eggs have escaped the casualties peculiar to eggs.

'Bother!' said Charlie. 'What an old curmudgeon you are over the tin! I wish it were *my* maiden aunt.'

'I wish it were,' I replied.

A few days passed over eventlessly, except that Charlie and I grew restless at post hours, and depressed afterwards—except that we were unsuccessfully courted by seedy-looking individuals with unshaven chins, who seemed to grow more particular in their attentions as our engagements from home increased. Being as I said, low down in my class, I forgot how long the siege of Derry lasted, but I know the ships only came in just in time. Would our ship come in? and in time?

Charlie's dress bags were still in perspective, and allusions thereto rendered him touchy; but the darkest hour is that before the dawn. We had had our darkest hour, and the dawn came. We had been wandering dejectedly in the gardens, and stared at the river through the fog, without being cheered—when, on entering my rooms, I found a letter in an unknown female hand.

'Maiden aunt,' said Charlie, 'my bottle of champagne to the next cigar you have bestowed on you.'

I took no notice of him, but tore open the seal.

"Lyringa Grove, Edinburgh."

"Hang it!" said Charlie, "she's removed: how about the salmon?"

"*My dear boy,*

"How I was carried back yesterday to the time when you were a child at my knee, and I teaching you your letters. Do you remember that big box, Arthur, and how you would never say anything but 'B was a butcher, and had a great dog?'

"Pleasing," said Charlie. "Maiden aunt in evident possession of faculties. Well——"

"Lackaday! I have no doubt you have forgotten it. I never thought once that my favourite nephew would have let so long a time pass without a word; but as you say, 'These unhappy differences have come between us,' and prevented you seeking me out, for fear of being considered intrusive.

"My dear boy, had you no better memory of me than that? On many accounts I wish you had made yourself known to me sooner. You know—at all events it is so—that I have no near relatives, and I hoped that you would stand in the place of one to me. When I could hope so no longer, and only think you had forgotten your old aunt, I adopted a dear young friend and connection of mine—Mary Mackenzie—(not that she had any need of adoption, in one sense; for she has a comfortable independent fortune); but we are both lonely women, and both know that riches have nothing to do with happiness—('By Jove! haven't they, old lady?' burst in Charlie)—so we have cast in our lot together, and she is a dear friend and daughter to me. My dear boy, will you come and see me? I am a foolish old woman to build castles in the air, at my time of life; but still if you can manage to arrange your professional duties—(Charlie, irreverently, 'Can't he just, you maiden aunt?') and will come to see me next month, it will make me happy, and bring back old times. Good-bye, my dear boy."

"Yours, &c.,

"MARTHA THOROUGHGOOD."

"P.S. Mary is away now, but returns next week I believe; and will be prepared to like you."

"Oh maiden aunt—maiden aunt!" exclaimed Charlie, "thou art shallow as thy nephew's purse."

"Has been, Charlie. You see the times aren't over when, if some men choose to walk in a new path, they find the road laid down with gold paving-stones. But I wonder what age she is?"

"Who?—The aunt?"

"Pshaw!—Mary."

"Mary—ah, Mary. Why, considering your female relative's powers of subtraction, and the way she alludes to her as a lonely woman, I should say not much below fifty."

"There's a limit to chaff," I observed, angrily, as I sat down to think of my position.

How Charlie appeased the Philistines, I do not exactly know, but they were appeased for the time.

Unshaven chins left off their craving for our society, while Charlie Blake took pleasure in openly parading in regions before marked dangerous, with the graceful ease and assurance of a man who has 'come in' for what he has given up expecting. I say Charlie Blake did this. As for me, I had never felt less exhilarated. Had the golden image in the future only appeared to me in the form of my aunt, I should have been happy indeed; but one's prospects, to hang on a woman one had never seen!

I was sitting in my rooms, one day, trying to see a bright future through the medium of my pipe, when a letter was brought to me in the writing of my aunt. A wild rush at the seal, and the contents were soon my own. The old lady thought I might like to see a photograph of her young friend Mary Mackenzie, and so she sent me one which had been taken by a friend.

Now, at the time of which I speak cartes de visite were not; no benignant statesmen with extended forefinger on heavy volume; no smiling Surgeons at home, or mighty foreign powers displaying quite touching proofs of affection to their families, might be bought for prices

not worth mentioning, to repose under cover of gay moroccos on drawing-room tables.

These things were yet to be. So my heart beat loudly as I undid the paper in which lay my future bride.

Did the royal Harry so unclasp the miniatures of his lady loves? [I wonder, by the way, if poor Anne would have been trotted over on her useless mission, if photographs had come in?] At all events, the royal sceptre and crown were not endangered. Alas for me, my all was staked thereon!

I opened the paper! Ye powers! Could mortal in the blessed guise of woman be so ugly? This likeness represented a figure of colossal proportions as far as the knees. Her eyes, or rather her eye, for one was wanting, was of that kind commonly denominated a 'wall,' her nose was embellished by a disfiguring scar, while her mouth—had I been in the mood to think of it, it would have permitted a belief in the man who eat the church and eat the steeple. My wife!!

At this moment, Charlie Blake came in. I had heard his laugh on the staircase. He was going to some party, and the fellow had the audacity to come before me in the dress bags which he had ordered on my fortune. He had some studs, too, I noticed angrily, and a new pin with ruby eyes; and as he came up, he brought in a perfume (only to be obtained at a great expense) which made me feel, friend though he was, I hated him.

I flung the likeness of my bride at him, with a savage laugh, as he came in. He picked it up and muttered, '*Le diable!*' out of politeness, I suppose, to a lady.

'Pleasant,' I said, 'considering that is the person on the prospect of my marriage with whom you choose to dress yourself up like a man milliner.'

'By Jove!' said Charlie Blake again.

I hated him more than ever. I said so. I told him to send back his jewellery and his perfumes, for I was not going to be tied to a creature with one eye.

'My good fellow,' said Charlie,

'but you don't know what you're saying, we'll trust reflection will bring you to a more Christian frame of mind.' So saying Charlie strolled up to the mirror, tried on two fingers of a glove, murmured, 'I'm engaged to little Lucy for the 4th,' and left me to go to his confounded party.

How selfish men are, I reflected; and as I thought of those studs and perfumes, my wrath exploded.

I paced my room, I walked miles over my carpet, and at every square, I vowed that I would not have Miss Mackenzie. But what could I do? Debt and her Majesty's charitable institutions stared me in the face, or—and I gave Miss Mackenzie a passing salute on the carpet for being so ugly.

Charles returned at three in a provokingly good humour.

The dancing had been a success, supper good, champagne the correct thing.

'I'm glad you've been enjoying yourself,' I said, savagely, 'as it seems to me your enjoyments are limited.'

'You don't mean to say,' exclaimed Charlie, looking hard at me, 'that you are going to turn us both over?'

'Yes, I do,' I replied, 'unless you have a fancy to become the possessor of—' and I glanced at Miss M. on the carpet; 'if you have, take her, aunt's fortune, and all, and—bless you, my boy.'

Charlie whistled and took up the picture.

'I wish she had two eyes,' he said, thoughtfully; 'it puts a man under a suspicion.'

'She mayn't be so bad after all, I added, viewing the case more hopefully.'

'It is done by the sun,' mused Charlie, (with that belief in photographic power we had at first), 'and that can't be mistaken.'

'Oh well, after all, beauty is but skin deep,' I pursued.

'It's a good thing you hold such views, old fellow. It is simply (don't be hurt) hideous; but we'll trust, seeing this, we know the worst. Come Arthur, do your duty like a man; or stay, we've lived and suffered together, and I won't desert

you, my boy. I'll agree to toss up as to who it shall be.'

'Very well.' I grasped at the straw.

Charlie pulled from the recesses of his pocket a suspicious-looking halfpenny. The golden age had not begun with us.

'Heads,' I faltered.

'Tails,' quoth Charlie, as being more appropriate.

Up went her Majesty's current coin. Down—I felt my heart beat against the table in that moment of suspense.

All right, old fellow,' said Charlie Blake, 'you've got her.'

I looked. Heads—unmistakably heads.

'Well,' said Charlie, as I continued speechless, 'as it's settled, I suppose I may as well turn in. At all events, it's some consolation to think the young person's affections will probably be at liberty to fix themselves on you. Good night, Arthur, and pleasant dreams.

The savage left me. 'Pleasant dreams!' I tossed restlessly to and fro till my pillow scorched me. I attacked my water-jug, and again returned to my pillow, and arose, as it was probable, unrefreshed. Days passed on—the appointed hour grew near. I lost my appetite; I lost all interest in the parting of my hair; I went and played with little Tommy Smallwood at long whist for love, for five hours without a murmur. I dined with Smith, and stopped at the second glass of champagne. Altogether, I was in a fair way to alarm my friends. Some men said I had a hopeless attachment (hadn't I?); others, that I had overworked my brain (those who didn't know me); and, as I avoided my friends, so they grew tired of me in my present state. Only, Charlie Blake avoided me too, and that cut me. I might be surly to him, but still, under the present circumstances, I thought he would have stood by me. I heard him laughing with Smith on the floor below, possibly at me, and I grew hot at the idea. Wouldn't I pay his debts after my marriage? (An icy shudder crossed me.) And now that he knew I couldn't get out of it, he was basely ungrateful.

It was the evening before my departure, and I was standing helplessly regarding my portmanteau, when Charlie Blake came in.

'All ready?' he said, cheerfully. (How easy is such cheerfulness.)

'I shall be in due time,' I replied, in that funereal tone I had adopted.

'But your hair,' said Charlie, surveying me, 'and your garments, and —hem, pardon me—your general aspect. Really you look more like some Esau than a Christian of to-day.'

A mirror opposite reflected Charlie's words.

'I am not going to act happy lover.'

'No. But won't she expect it? and so I must do it, with your leave.'

I stared wildly.

'Yes, Arthur,' he went on, 'this shutting yourself up and going about unshaven and unshorn, sounds better than it looks; so, craving your permission, I am going to try for the heiress.'

'But—'

He cut me short. 'My dear fellow, it's no matter of choice; one of us must do it. I am the tougher animal, and if it weren't for the aunt, I should be as right as—'

'Take my name, my identity, what you will,' I said, wringing his hand, 'and may I turn out a more satisfactory fellow to you than I have ever been to myself.'

'All right,' said Charlie, 'and now I must turn in and pack—I suppose I may take the dress bags in case my heiress dances, without exciting your ire now.'

He shut the door and left me. Did he really think his offer so light and easy? I could not tell. But who would not have a bosom friend after this?

I went to bed and slept as I had never slept since that portrait had haunted my dreams.

Here ended all personal concern of mine in that unlucky picture. The remaining portion of the story I have no wish or power to speak about, and leave it to Charlie Blake to tell in his own words.

And so I took Arthur's ticket, and the place which should have been

his in the Great Northern train, opposite an inflammatory-looking old gentleman in a fur cap, and a spinster getting on in years unmistakably, and of a most forbidding cast of countenance. I was attracted by that spinster. Would the Mackenzie be like her? Would her eyes suggest young gooseberries as unmistakably? Would she wear cotton gloves; and have as strong an appetite for tallow pies? As I made these remarks to myself—I made them and sundry others over and over again—the lady's face grew sterner and sterner. I could not keep my eyes off. At last, she requested me to hand her a corpulent umbrella, upon which I sat oblivious, and left the carriage.

A cold chill seized me. Could that have been Miss Mackenzie? I had seen her ticket, and it was marked Edinburgh. 'The last straw breaks the camel's back.' I was that camel. The idea haunted me, also, how I should be received at Lyringa Grove. I had a story to relate, but I had not acted it on the stage, and I might fail. I read 'Punch' as if it were the milliner's bill, and I the father of a family all wearing crinoline. His follies failed to make me smile.

I was uncivil to the young women at the refreshment stalls. When the old gentleman in the fur cap grew crimson with the heat, I did not offer my seat near the window. What were his feelings to mine?

At last, in the dull grey light of a foggy evening, we reached Edinburgh. Everybody got out. I got out.

'Cab, sir?' said a jolly-looking cabby, who exasperated me by his jovial appearance. Should I wait till morning? No; morning light would make things worse. I gave the address, and got in. At every slackening of speed on the part of the gaunt old horse, I felt a tremor. We drove on into the suburbs. There were trees and fields; then an iron gate was opened. We creaked over a gravel drive, and a glow of ruddy light from the windows of a good-sized house said we had arrived.

There is on record the history of a venerable mother of a family who

lived in her shoe. Would that I had been acquainted with her secret, and could have retired into that residence. As it was, the entrance of myself (I'm six foot one in my boots), my portmanteau, and cabby made a considerable noise in the hall. A most highly respectable and very corpulent flunkey stood at the door, before whom, owing to the intense respectability of his aspect I suppose, I actually blushed. At this moment, a little old lady, who, by reason of a narrowness round the base, and a profusion of headgear, reminded me of a well-grown cauliflower, appeared at a door, and rushed towards me. And while I stood, doubtful of her intentions, she imprinted an anything but doubtful kiss on my chin, as the only attainable feature.

'My dear Arthur, my dear boy,' said the little old lady, 'how glad I am to see you here' (in parenthesis to hoary head who stood by, rubicund and serene). 'Saunders, this is my nephew, Mr. Arthur.'

What could I do? Contradict the old lady to her face. Be turned out by hoary head as an impostor, and lose all chance of my golden bride. In honour to Arthur, I could not. There was, too, a steaming odour ascending to my nostrils, resembling roast goose unmistakably. At all events, I would stay to dinner.

So with many expressions of affection, the Aunt ushered me into the drawing-room. Was my bride there? No. And Thoroughgood was again repeating her expressions of satisfaction at seeing me there—was roasting meat at an enormous fire, and feared I was starving, after the fashion of old ladies, when I heard a step in the passage. A lighter step than I should have thought the foot of such a Colossus as the photograph represented would have made. Click went the door. I turned round to meet my fate, and saw, instead—not an angel with rosy wings borne on a cloud, but something slightly of the genus in the form of a young and pretty girl, with laughing blue eyes, waving light hair, and most becomingly dressed in—excuse me, ladies, whether muslin or gauze, I am unable to say.

Aunt Thoroughgood looked up and sighed. Well might she sigh. It was not policy to introduce me to such a young lady, when I was to fall in love with somebody else.

'Well, Aunt,' said the young lady at the door, 'won't you introduce me to your nephew?' She smiled so oddly that I stared. Possibly she knew about my coming for the heiress. 'Miss Murphey,—my nephew, Arthur Hamilton, and I was Charlie Blake. So we went in to the roast goose in the other room. I could not regret Miss Mackenzie, with that merry little girl near me, and plenty of "victuals to eat and to drink," as the song says. There would be plenty of time for 'the other,' after a little flirtation with this, before I settled down.'

So I enjoyed my dinner. The soup was a testimony to the principles of the Scotch cook, who put in all that was required. The fish had apparently but just left its native element; and the roast goose was everything a goose roasted should be. If I abstained from the stuffing on account of the ladies, I did not regret that abstinence. During the sweets, I looked at Miss Murphey, and yet I am anything but a ladies' man.

I might be a little absent sometimes when I ought to have answered to the name of Arthur, as the advertisements for lost dogs say. I might feel I was eating Arthur's dinner, and drinking Arthur's wine, but Arthur declined it, and really I seemed to answer the purpose so well, that I thought he was as well at the Temple.

'My dear,' said Miss Thoroughgood, surveying me intensely through her spectacles, as we stood over the fire after dinner. 'How much lighter your hair has grown! When you were a boy it used to be, nearly black, and your eyes are lighter too.'

'How very odd,' said Miss Murphey, with another little sly glance out of her eyes at my aunt. 'Do you think he's an impostor?'

An impostor, good heavens! What did the girl mean? I felt I grew red even to the roots of my whiskers, but what was singular was that Aunt Thoroughgood turned very red too.

I felt (afterwards) what a good opportunity it was for discovering myself. I think I should have done it, had not thoughts of Saunders restrained me. Imagine his being told to take down Mr. Hamilton's coat at night, and to bring up Mr. Blake's in the morning. However, Miss Thoroughgood dismissed my hair from the subject of conversation, sat down in an easy chair, and was very soon (God bless her and preserve the habit in old ladies) in the land of Nod. So Miss Murphey and I turned to each other.

'I am your cousin,' she observed, looking at me with her blue eyes. 'At least, I am Aunt Thoroughgood's once removed, though I do call her Aunt,' (whereupon I observed that we would not count the removes). Truly if Arthur's identity brought me nothing worse than this cousinship, I should be a lucky fellow, indeed. Here I demanded whether as cousins we should not address each other in cousinly fashion.

'I think you may,' said Miss Mary, working vigorously at some mechanism in her lap, after the fashion of young ladies, 'as you aren't like what I expected,' (a marvel if I were, I thought). I said, however, as if one isn't always obliged to say what one thinks to a pretty girl sitting near one in a drawing-room, 'Indeed! pray what monster did you expect?'

'Oh, not a monster at all,' said Miss Mary, 'only a very practical person, a sort of grown-up version of the little boy who hated poetry, because it was nothing to eat.'

'A sensible little fellow,' I replied (thinking we were a good deal alike after all), 'and very like a young lady to condemn one for caring for one's bread and butter.'

'Oh, I dare say it is very sensible' (slightly shrugging her shoulders); and 'if I were an heiress, I suppose it would be sensible of you to offer to thread my needles,' she said, laughingly. Whereupon—But this is folly. She told me that Miss Mackenzie had had a trifling quarrel with the old lady, and had gone away for a short time, but would soon be back again. 'In the meantime, Cousin Arthur, you must be

content with me.' Could I be content? Ah yes, if it weren't for Arthur, and the unpaid debts.

And then Miss Thoroughgood awoke, and we had our coffee. I watched the little figure of Miss Murphey flitting about: she did everything so prettily, even to putting the sugar in my cup, and looked as if she was flirting with the cream jug. (I did not go so far as to wish myself a cream jug that night for her sake, after the fashion of Mr. Disraeli's lovers.)

Then Miss Thoroughgood began to grow personal and disagreeable once more.

'My dear Arthur, I was thinking just now about your father.'

'Dreaming, dear, don't you mean?' put in Mary, saucily.

'No, Mary, I was not asleep; though you always persist in disbelieving me. You are like your father, Arthur' (extraordinary coincidence that I should be like Arthur's father). 'There's the same stern look about your mouth when you are grave as I saw when you thought I was asleep just now. (A decided proof she had been.) I only said, "Indeed!" Your father was a stern man, Arthur, when I knew him. Is he altered?' (Confounded my father.)

'But little,' I said, and turned to Miss Murphey; but she was eating her bread and butter thoughtfully.

'Has time dealt lightly with him?' pursued Miss Thoroughgood. 'Is he grey?'

Was he grey? I felt uncomfortable. I might commit myself, notwithstanding the old lady's hazy recollections, and though the questions were easy. Yet a man must be in very peculiar circumstances to feel as I felt then.

'Slightly,' I observed.

'Well, I am surprised,' said Miss Thoroughgood; 'I always thought he would be grey so early.'

I turned to Miss Murphey again, and was silent.

'And how has Julia turned out?' continued my tormentor.

I had heard of Arthur's sisters often, and seen one or two of them, but—he had eight—whether Julia was old or young, married or

single, I had quite forgotten. Besides, what was there in Julia to turn out? What could a person turn out? Why, pretty, of course. I felt myself growing warm.

'She had turned out pretty,' I observed, prompted by my inner man.

'Pretty!' cried Miss Thoroughgood, holding up both her hands. 'Julia pretty! I said Julia.' (I was silent.) 'Well-a-day, we never know how to account for tastes. Listen.' (I was listening, heaven knows.) Here the old lady dived into her bag, brought out a letter, arranged her spectacles, and began again about that wretched Julia.

'A friend of mine writes, who saw your sisters at a ball a few weeks ago (by Jove! I hoped the correspondent didn't write often), "Ann and Mary Hamilton looked as handsome young women as any in the room, and were much sought after. Poor Julia certainly doesn't take after the family. She is unmistakably very plain."

'Tastes do differ, aunt,' said little Miss Murphey, to my great relief.

'In the meanwhile, will you take your tea, and let your nephew have his, or he will think as little of my tea as your friend does of Miss Julia's beauty. You must have a strong attachment to your family' (turning to me). 'You grew quite red when aunt said your sister was thought plain. Besides, you know she said she did not take after the family.' And she looked demurely at her tea.

It was disagreeable being somebody else under Miss Murphey's eyes. However, the aunt's personalities ceased. Miss Murphey's tea, though I abhor the fluid, tasted drinkable to me, and I felt tolerably happy, even though I was Charles Blake—in debt—no nearer the heiress—and wasting my time. How I wished Miss Murphey had been that golden image; and how oily the wheels would have gone then. What a jolly little girl she was! I shouldn't object to turn Benedict with such an inducement. The next morning saw me established quite as a member of the family at Lyringa Grove. Miss Murphey looked quite as

charming as she had done under the lamplight. She was watering her flowers and feeding her canaries, as busy as that little insect whom Dr. Watts holds up for our example, when I came in. I was not going to be cheated out of my 'good-morning,' though; and waited till she put down her seed-boxes. And then the old lady came in.

I began to act dutiful nephew to her, but Mary pushed me aside, arranged the cushions, and set her up like a ninepin.

'Ah! Mary knows no one can do anything for me like she does,' apologized Miss Thoroughgood.

'Except Miss Mackenzie,' put in Mary, looking ironically at me; and again the aunt sighed. (Was it not a sigh of compassion for me?)

After breakfast, I, who can only be induced into a vehicle behind a thorough stepper—smoking allowed—actually found myself like a domestic animal, with a shawl over my arm, going into a miniature clothes-basket on wheels, which I could have carried with ease, pronged by an enormous hoop (they had just come in again), with Miss Mary beside me, holding the most absurd whip growing out of a parasol.

I couldn't drive such a ridiculous conveyance. I couldn't take reins which seemed made for a rocking-horse, so Mary took them, and drove me, while I creaked in the clothes-basket, and actually felt contented. I came back contented. After luncheon, too, I found myself scratching my hands in attempts at embedded violets in the hedges, which Miss Murphrey pointed out at the foot of the banks, with the top of her parasol. It did strike me that the parasol generally aimed at those violets which were deepest in nettles; and when I returned scratched and bleeding, Miss Murphrey suggested docking-leaf quite coolly as a remedy.

Still I was content. And was not this contentment dangerous? Was it not? Evening came on, and when the siesta was in process I took up my position at an heroic distance from Mary's pricker. The recollections afterwards were less troublesome, only the aunt would

puzzle her head as to which of Arthur's ancestors I had derived my light hair from. 'All the family had dark,' she said, surveying me perplexed. Here Miss Mary came to my aid. 'There are mysteries in the masculine toilette,' she laughed. And so Aunt Thoroughgood's mind was relieved in supposing my hair was dyed! It was come to this!

And yet Mary's tea tasted more like nectar. I felt I could have forsaken beer and tobacco at unseemly hours, held the kettle, or walked out with a poodle in a red jacket for Mary's sake, but, alas! the grapes were unattainable.

So the days passed away. I took to the basket carriage, and found myself trying to ingratiate Mary's canaries (the feeble-minded creatures trembling and fluttering at my approach, not seeming to take to me). I also found myself looking forward to Aunt Thoroughgood's nap, and suggesting sleepy viands to the dear old lady at dinner. She was a worthy soul, and did not seem to notice my conversations with Mary. I wished Miss Mackenzie would come; at least—that is, I thought it time. A letter from Arthur suggested it. He wanted to hear how I got on with the heiress. Why didn't I write? Ah! why didn't I? I had nothing to say. Hamlet had not come on yet, though the play was 'Hamlet,' and the pit was growing impatient. It was time. I said so twice that afternoon. I had written (though anything but a poet) a stanza to blue eyes in Mary's album—and very flowing lines indeed. I found myself looking at the moon before I went down to dinner, so I took myself to task; and when Mary greeted me with her sunny smile, I refrained from any answering sunshine. During dinner, I discussed the subject of drainage with Aunt Thoroughgood with the gravity of a whole Board of Health. I saw Mary elevate her pretty shoulders, and for that reason I avoided her glance, and ate my dinner like an alderman. Had I not been looking at the moon? And when a man had advanced to that stage, and the next was impossible, had he not

better pause at once? Pshaw! it was time to end this trifling.

So after dinner, when Aunt Thoroughgood had left our company for that other land so distant, I avoided Mary. I went to a distant table, and taking up a great book, I sat down to it. Did not that prove my weakness? Mary put her work by, and came to the table. She did not seem offended. Nay, she had cause for triumph, if she cared for such triumph.

'What have you there?' she said, placing her small fingers on the musty volume.

"Abridged Edition of the Lives of Foreign Scotch Divines," by Job Plasterman.'

'There! I'm sure you don't care for that. Come and play chess with me.'

I did not care for *that*, but I did not say so. However, what could a man do but rise, with musty book on one hand and pretty girl on the other. And yet I felt it was a dangerous game. That seeking in the box for the pieces, with small fingers seeking for their pieces too, followed by the importance of hiding the two pawns behind your back, and the deliberate choice (Mary and I always made a great deal of this part of the proceedings). As I say, it's a dangerous game. To-night, however, Mary made me put on all the men, chose her hand without any deliberation, and—I missed it.

'Why did you want to read?' said Miss Mary, moving her pawn.

Why did I? I could not tell her. Oxford man, and—ahem!—rising barrister though I was, I felt confused.

'Why shouldn't I read?' at length I feebly remarked, and turned her attention to the game.

'Shall you read when Miss Mackenzie comes?' persisted Mary. 'Aunt Thoroughgood heard to-day that she is coming most likely next Wednesday.'

Frantic movements on the part of the gentleman's bishop; and, goaded to desperation, he says—

'Hang Miss Mackenzie!' After all his resolutions too.

'Arthur! isn't that rude? But you don't know her—she's a very nice person.'

'I have seen her, Mary—Arthur—that is, I saw a likeness of her.'

'Oh! Plain, isn't she?'

'Plain!' I exclaimed. 'Hideous!'

I heard a suppressed laugh, but Mary was under the table, having dropped a piece, and when she rose, it was with a vehement 'Check!' on her tongue.

I didn't see it.

'No, you never do see anything; you are very blind,' she said, laughing. 'I don't know what you will be like, when Miss Mackenzie comes; for you know what they say is blind.'

'Nothing at all appropriate,' I observed, in a surly tone, thrusting my king on to destruction.

'Ah!' said Mary, looking up; 'but you like heiresses, don't you?'

What an odious conversation to a man who had come for an heiress! I did hate prying women.

Another mad move on the part of the frantic bishop, and I was checkmated.

I would not play chess any more, I said to myself; and I did not. I ceased to coo to Mary's canaries. The basket carriage did not creak under my weight, and the pony doubtless was proportionately relieved. Was it only the pony? I did all this for two whole days. I was acting with the usual good sense of Charles Blake, Esquire. I patted that gentleman on the back. (This is figurative.) I said, 'Well done, Charlie, my boy!' but I could not raise my own spirits thereby: I still said, 'Hang Miss Mackenzie!' mentally, and looked at the moon when I was alone.

And so the day came before that one on which Mary told me the heiress was to come. We were going to a pic-nic, but I felt very low indeed. Wasn't the apple going to swing over my head for another twenty-four hours? and hadn't I to keep that great fence in view between it and me—all the time? Not all my cigar-bills, unpaid-for coats, dunning brewers, covetous and mercenary tailors, had ever preyed so upon my spirits.

I wasn't Charlie Blake. I was the little longing boy for the plum-cake, and forced to submit to the

bread and butter. What! did all little boys have butter? and wasn't I content? I cut my chin in shaving, though the sun was streaming through the windows. Even the sight of Mary in a white dress, and a hat with a bird of paradise reposing on the top, did not raise my spirits. What had I to do with birds of paradise, or with anything but the most earthly of the tribe? There was a man, too, with a great deal of red hair, who, Aunt Thoroughgood said, was much 'sought after.' He seemed, I thought, on far too intimate terms with paradise. Mary smiled, too, as if she liked him; she shook out her blue ribbons, and actually seemed pleased (girls have no discrimination) when he paid her a stupid compliment.

More people came, and I was introduced, and I bowed, and smiled, and hated them. I was to drive two girls (by courtesy) in brown, who were to be trusted—and very steady and mature they looked. Red whiskers, who rejoiced in the name of Gushington—was to drive Aunt Thoroughgood and Mary. What a fool he looked, handing her into his trap! As if she couldn't get in by herself!

The girls in brown did not belie their sober nature. Their schoolmistress (though it must have been long—very long since they required such a preceptress) might have been guarding them invisibly, and smiling in spirit; nevertheless they might have been desired a trifle more amusing. They—at least, the one on the seat beside me, was of a pleasing turn of mind, and seemed grateful for what luck had bestowed on her in the shape of myself, and the back-seat. She liked picnics? 'Oh yes.' And driving? 'Oh yes.' And a dusty road, with the sun like blazes on her head? 'Oh she didn't mind dust or the sun,'—all of which might be gratifying, but not amusing. Happy 'brown ribbons,' who could be happy in waltz or carriage, all unconscious of the feelings of thy partner! When we reached the old abbey (which I thought we never should reach), I was requested to show the brown girl a good point

for sketching, and would I take a camp-stool? I was a Christian, whatever my frame of mind might be; and we sat undisturbed till a great bell sounded. Then the young lady, whose time seemed to have been spent in rubbing out, and who was now struggling with the legs of a cow figuratively on her paper, mildly asked, 'Was I hungry?' and as I thought this betokened a desire for a prolonged struggle with the cow, I gave a more truthful than polite 'Yes,' and we descended. I felt angry as I took my place on the grass. Mary told me afterwards I helped to the pigeon pie, as if I were at war with its contents; and so I was. Wasn't I Arthur's pigeon, and my own plucking just about to begin?

Mary sat opposite to me, smiling at Mr. Gushington's very poor jokes over the crackers. For my part, I see small amusement in crackers, unless indeed you happen yourself to make a particularly good remark.

However Mary pulled the crackers at one side, and red whiskers on the other, and she laughed because it wouldn't go off—and then it went off, and she laughed again, and then he read the motto, and she laughed again, and gave him the comfit. Why couldn't he pull the thing with somebody else?

I didn't enjoy it. The lady next to me, with a fixed purpose for lobster salad, was heavy. The brown ribbons reverted to how she should finish the cow after lunch, and was heavy too—while Miss Murphrey opposite was not heavy, and I am not the man to look pleasantly at the cold mutton, with the hot roast at the other table spread out for somebody else. I found that champagne may be as unininvigorating as toast-and-water, and that chickens may be tender (and cut up) without a power to please in their tenderness, even though one hopes to marry an heiress shortly. I had never thought so before. I did now.

I sat long over that cheerless entertainment, until I saw an old lady eye me with suspicion, and then I got up and moved on by myself into a little wood, where—my thoughts

being in a medley that afternoon—I wished to avoid the world; so I threw myself on a bed of nettles, and called myself a fool.

'What's done, Charlie Blake,' I observed, 'can't be helped. For the future—' And then down below I saw Mary coming over the stile by herself, chopping off the heads of the flowers with her parasol. So I strolled down my bank, and met her.

'Hasn't it been pleasant,' she said (by the way, I thought her face looked very grave before she saw me—but I wasn't up to young ladies), 'and everybody charming?'

'Meaning I suppose thereby Mr. Gushington?—to me he seems an insufferable puppy.'

If ever a girl who didn't talk slang said, 'Oh, you muff!' with her eyes, Mary said so then.

'There are many things worse than puppies,' said Miss Murphrey, colouring a little, and continuing to chop.

'I am down—don't hit me, Mary,' said I. 'Do you care for this red-whiskered fellow?'

'They aren't red, Arthur—but no—I don't care for him' (a little scornfully), and we were silent.

How pretty she looked! I had made up my mind that I would go away without a word—but I could not—so I 'did it.' I told her how I had come for the sake of the heiress who was to help us, and what a poor wretch I was, with a cartload of debts hanging about me—and how before the heiress had come, she being there—I—etc., etc., and how useless it was. But though I could not make love to her, I would not stay and make it to any one else. I would leave to-night, and try if there was nothing else but an heiress who would help to roll this heavy load away from us.

Her blue eyes had a curious look in them when I paused. The worst had yet to be told.

'Arthur,' she began.

'Stay, Mary,' I said, and I felt a blush on my face, 'I am not Arthur.'

'Not Arthur—not my cousin?' She started back as if she were about to cry out 'murder,' or 'Mr. Gushington,' but looking at me as a pre-

liminary measure, seemed to reassure her. Then I told her the rest,—how Arthur had grown ill over the photograph, and I had taken his place. How every one had greeted me as Arthur, and I had been too cowardly to face an explanation. Then I asked her if she would not accord to Charlie Blake the grace she would have given her cousin? I had freely confessed—

'And expect to be as freely forgiven, I suppose. Well, I don't see what else you can do, though it was very wrong. There is one condition, though, to the act of grace.'

'Well! What was it?'

'You will stay till Miss Mackenzie comes—for an act of penance. You are not obliged to make love to her, you know.'

'Thank you,' I said; for I confess to a feeling of disappointment at the cavalier way in which she had treated my offer. I felt piqued. What can man offer more than his hand, even though that hand be an empty one?

She might be prudent; perhaps she deemed such a hopeless attachment not worth alluding to; still, though prudence is doubtless an estimable quality, yet a man may desire other qualities in his fair one. Something seemed to amuse her too. We were hardly out of the wood when, standing still, Mary burst forth into a peal of silvery laughter. 'I cannot help it, Arthur; pray forgive it.'

I felt angry in my heart at her; and I think Mary saw my disappointment and anger, as we silently joined the rest of the party. I was glad to get back—glad with a negative gladness, when I put my companions, again under the maternal wing. There was nothing more to be done now. I went upstairs and packed my portmanteau. This was the first time I had meddled with young ladies, and it should be the last. Oh, you wise Solomon! What a world this would be if your thoughts and your acts were the same.

I had only to say good-bye to Aunt Thoroughgood (London being unable to settle its law-suits without me would explain matters in that

quarter), and to bid that—young person farewell—who would doubtless hold out her pretty hand, smile, and go out to gather violets with that puppy, Gushington, five minutes afterwards.

As I went downstairs a servant met me, not Saunders, but one of the housemaids, saying I was wanted in the library. ‘Who is there?’ I inquired.

‘Only Miss Mackenzie, sir,’ Susan replied.

‘Only Miss Mackenzie!’ Well really this was making a dead set at me; she couldn’t be going to propose!

I would represent my forlorn condition in very plain terms, if I saw a chance of it. Hang it! I wished I had gone straight off. I didn’t wish Arthur at the Temple now.

I went into the room, but there was no one but Mary. ‘Some one told me Miss Mackenzie had come,’ I said. ‘Thank goodness she isn’t come—I hate seeing the woman.’

‘Hate seeing the woman!’ said Mary, with a little smile, which I couldn’t make out, and a bright colour in her cheeks. ‘Are you sure she isn’t here, Arthur—I mean Mr. Blake—hovering about you in the shape of an invisible spirit?’

For once in my life I stared.

‘You won’t notice her,’ she went on, ‘even though she is before you. It was not fair that you should not be Arthur, and I myself. You are not like the knight in the fairy tale, Mr. Blake, who found out the lady even after she was changed into the cat, from the depth of feeling in her mews.’

‘But the photograph?’ I murmured feebly, not being myself. Indeed, an infant, so to speak, might at that moment have knocked me down. ‘Who was that?’

‘I assure you,’ she said, smiling,

‘it was I—only done by an amateur.’ (God bless him! I mentally added.) ‘I stood too near—that made me look so gigantic, and then I moved—that deprived me of an eye.’

‘We said you were like the Sphinx pyramid, Mary.’

Mary laughed. ‘They said it was not like me, and so I sent it. I thought it would frighten all the crows away; and when I heard you were still coming, I thought I would rely upon it *not* being like me. I had a struggle with dear Aunty’s idea of deceit. She has had many a sigh over me; but as the servants all call me “Miss Mary,” I was safe;—and so—and so I will forgive you for all the pretty things you have said of me to my face, and will never do so any more.’

And then I stood before her, not knowing what to say—wasn’t the prize too great?

‘Mr. Blake,’ said Mary, coming towards me, and shyly holding out her little white hand (which it is needless to say was soon in another larger and browner one), ‘you asked me something this afternoon—shall I answer it now?—or do you still “hate the woman?”’

Did I hate the woman? No, I don’t think I did. I had loved her for herself, and she knew it—so I did not go away.

\* \* \* \* \*

I don’t know what Arthur’s feelings were when he saw my pretty bride, because I only thought about my own at that time. He had, however, a well-made coat on at my wedding, which was paid for—but—he did not dance—he sat apart, and somewhat gloomy.

I keep the ugly photograph; for I can never forget what I gained and Arthur lost by amateur photography. Here we may drop the curtain.







AARON HILL,  
DRAMATIC AUTHOR AND OPERA MANAGER  
(HAYMARKET AND DEURY LANE, 1710).  
*From the Print by Halsberg.*

## THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS:

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED  
WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA;  
THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT;  
WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS  
WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

By the Author of '*Queens of Song*'



FRANÇOIS XAVIER GEMINIANI.

### CHAPTER II.

#### The King's Theatre and the Little Theatre in the Haymarket.

THE EARL OF MIDDLESEX, HANDEL'S CO-  
CESSOR—GALUPPI, 'IL BURANELLI'—  
FASHIONABLE SINGERS—VANESCHI—  
MONTICELLI—A FAT PRIVA DONNA—  
OPERA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—  
SIGNOR AMICOMI, SCENE PAINTER—  
CASTRUCCI, THE ECCENTRIC FIDDLER—  
VERACINI THE VAINGLORIOUS—FESTING  
THE GOOD-HEARTED—ORIGIN OF THE  
SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPORT OF DECAYED  
MUSICIANS AND THEIR FAMILIES—EF-  
FECT OF THE REBELLION ON OPERATIC  
AFFAIRS—GEMINIANI THE ERRATIC—  
THE LITTLE THEATRE IN THE HAY-  
MARKET—GLUCK—REGINELLI—THE

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EARL OF MIDDLESEX JOINED BY OTHER  
NOBlemen, WHO FAIL—DR. CROZA—  
FELICE GIARDINI—CUZZONI: THE CON-  
SEQUENCES OF RECKLESS EXTRA-  
VAGANCE—A DIVISION IN THE CAMP—  
FLIGHT OF DR. CROZA—FASHIONABLE  
AMUSEMENTS. [1741—1750.]

OPERA Directors, above all other mortals, refuse to profit by the warnings of their fellow-men, and persist in buying their own experience, generally at a most costly rate. Knowing the destiny from which scarcely one of their predecessors could escape, that failure is the rule, only proved by exceptional successes, they are stubborn in court ing ruin.

The moment that Handel flung down his cumbrous sceptre it was eagerly snatched up by the Earl of Middlesex. Very little is extant regarding this nobleman, beyond the fact that he was manager of the Opera from the autumn of 1741 to the spring of 1748, and that he had not, apparently, been endowed, either by nature or education, with the qualities requisite to form an able director.

His lordship engaged the theatre in the Haymarket, and an almost entirely new band of singers from the Continent. He enlisted also the services of Galuppi, then a very young man. Galuppi was more frequently called Il Buranello, from the little Venetian island where he was born. When eighteen, he had produced, at Venice, an opera which had failed; but in nowise discouraged, he studied hard, and went on undauntedly until he turned the tide of fortune in his favour.

After the fashion of the time, the singers chose their own songs, from the popular compositions of the day, by Leo, Hasse, Areno, Pescetti, Lampugnani, Domenico Scarlatti; and these were 'interwoven' by Galuppi in a pasticcio called '*Alessandro in Persia*' This piece had been originally written for Lucca, some three years previously, by the Abate Francesco Vanechi, when it was set by Paradies. The nephew of the priestly poet being in London at the time that the Earl of Middlesex's operatic reign began, was employed by him first as poet, and subsequently as assistant manager. Twelve years later, 'upon his lordship's abdication he assumed the sovereignty of the opera state,' to use Burney's pithy words.

The Opera opened October 31, 1741, with '*Alessandro in Persia*', which was represented twelve nights. The singers were Monticelli, Andreoni, Amorevoli, Signora Visconti, Signora Panichi, and Signora Tedeschi. They were all good, but not sufficiently so to insure a great success for the opera season. Angelo Maria Monticelli, the most remarkable of the men, appeared first on the stage at Rome, just ten years before he came to London. He was

so graceful, and had such a perfectly beautiful face and figure, that he commenced his career by impersonating female characters, women not being permitted to go on the stage in Rome. His voice was clear, soft, and free from defects of any kind. He never hazarded a difficulty which he was not certain of being able to execute. He was an excellent actor; and had he not come while the remembrance of the magnificent talents of Farinelli, the exquisite voice and majestic grace of Senesino, and the brilliant performance and statuesque beauty of Nicolini were fresh in the public mind, he would have made a profound impression. The Visconti had a shrill flexible voice, and was more admired in rapid songs than in those requiring pathos or intensity of expression. Her excessive fat afforded ample opportunity for sarcasm and joking to the wits of the day. Lord Chesterfield was with a group of friends on one occasion when they were speaking of this prima donna; they were guessing her age, and one gentleman, supposing her to be much younger than any other singer at the Opera, said he thought she was not more than two-and-twenty. 'You mean stone, sir, not years?' interrupted Lord Chesterfield.

Galuppi was enabled to give a more satisfactory idea of his capacity as an original composer in an opera called '*Penelope*', written expressly for our stage by Paolo Rolli, who had written a great deal in conjunction with Handel, and who was an admired librettist. This work was dedicated to the noble impresario, Lord Middlesex. At this time, being young, 'Galuppi's genius was not matured, and he copied the hasty, light, and flimsy style which was the fashion in Italy, and which the solidity and science of Handel had taught the English to despise. This opera was performed only five times, 'and in examining the pieces that were printed by Walah,' says Dr. Burney, 'it seems not to have been unjustly treated.'

In the following March (1742), another new opera was produced, entitled '*Scipione in Carthagina*'. The greater number of operas in the

eighteenth century were founded on classical or mythological subjects; Didone, Phaeton, Nero, Antigone, Semiramide, Artaserse, Zenobia, Perseus, were the personages round whom the plots of the operatic pieces were linked; and these personages always appeared in all the radiance of hoops, powdered wigs, red heels, silk stockings, paste buckles, and patches. Signor Amiconi, an Italian artist of considerable talent, was the scene-painter at the King's Theatre at this time. His scenes were greatly admired, and it was acknowledged that nothing so splendid had been seen in England before his advent. Music, singing, and painting were what Lord Middlesex depended on for success, as he had no dancers. The opera of 'Scipione' was followed by several pieces, the composition of Pergolese, Hesse, and other musicians, none of which pleased, and which were generally performed only three or four times. One of Porpora's operas, 'Temistocle,' was produced in the February of 1743, for the first time in England. It was full of shakes, for which the maestro had an extraordinary fancy; and one of the airs ('Contrasto assai') suggests the idea of having been composed in a shivering fit. The singers were the same as in the two preceding seasons, with the exception of some inferior performers, the most noticeable of whom was Giulia Frasi. This singer was then young, and interesting in person, with a sweet, clear voice, and a cold, smooth style, which was just good enough to enable her to escape censure.

At the close of 1743, Galuppi returned to Italy. He was succeeded by Lampugnani, a new composer, and a very young man. Lampugnani was an agreeable composer, and wrote in a gay, lively style. Critics have expressed various opinions of his merits, agreeing only in condemning his works as flimsy. He imitated the style of Hasse in his airs and choruses. The first piece which he brought out in London was 'Roxana,' which was followed in January by 'Alfonso.' Both these operas had a graceful gaiety of imagination, and evidenced an elegant

taste, peculiarly novel in their day, but lacking grandeur and richness of harmony.

Veracini then led the band. He had taken the place of conductor alternately with Festing, from the time that Pietro Castrucci was dismissed. Castrucci had come to England with Lord Burlington in 1715, and was one of the most eccentric men that ever lived: he was, in truth, regarded as little less than mad, although he was a brilliant performer on the violin. He had succeeded Corbett as first violin at the Opera, about 1718, and led the orchestra for many years. When he grew old, Handel wished to displace him for a younger man, John Clegg. Castrucci, who was in needy circumstances, and not in the least conscious of any failure in his hand, was unwilling to relinquish his post, when Handel, in order to convince him of his inability to occupy it, composed a concerto in which the second concertino was so arranged as to demand an equal degree of skill with the first; the second concertino he gave to Clegg, who, when the piece was being performed, afforded such proofs of his superiority, that poor Castrucci was forced to yield up his place, not to Clegg, however, but to Festing, another member of the orchestra. Castrucci detested the very name of Festing from that time; he would grow nearly insane on hearing it. A gentleman, for fun, used to address him in conversation by the name of his rival, 'Mr. Festing—I beg your pardon, Mr. Castrucci, I mean'; when Castrucci would fall into a perfect paroxysm of rage. Old, poor, and half silly, Castrucci immediately sank into oblivion, and at the age of eighty was obliged to supplicate the public for a benefit, on the score of his past services. Soon after this he died. It is Castrucci who is immortalized by Hogarth in his celebrated picture of the 'Enraged Musician.' Hogarth, previous to making his drawing, was cruel enough to collect all the noisiest street musicians and hawkers he could find, and beset the house of the poor Italian, bringing him to the window in a state of distraction

at the clamour and discord. While he was gesticulating in a perfect agony, the caricaturist made his sketch. Clegg's fate was a very terrible one. Through intense application and incessant practice, his mind became so deranged that he was confined in Bedlam. During his stay there, he was at intervals permitted to play on the violin, and attracted crowds to hear him.

Francesco Maria Veracini was born

at Florence about the close of the seventeenth century. He and his contemporary, Tartini, were regarded as the greatest masters of the violin that had ever been known. They were equally skilful and scientific as executants and as composers; but whatever parallel might have been drawn between their genius, it would have been impossible to find two men of more totally dissimilar personal character. Tartini was so



VERACINI.

humble and timid that he was never happy save in obscurity; whereas Veracini could not be content unless he was in the full glow of public homage. A story is told of him, which gives such a happy illustration of his character, that, although the incident did not occur in England, it may be mentioned. It was the custom at Lucca, during the Festa della Croce (held every year on the 14th of September), for the leading professionals of Italy, vocal and instrumental, to meet. Veracini put down his name for a solo concerto; but when he entered the church where the performance was to take place, he found the post of

honour occupied by Padre Girolamo Laurentii of Bologna, who, not knowing him, as Veracini had been absent some years in Poland, asked him 'where he was going?' 'To the place of first violin,' answered Veracini, haughtily. Laurentii then said that he had always been engaged to fill that post, but that if Veracini wished to play a concerto, either at vespers or during high mass, he should have a place assigned him. Veracini, without condescending to reply, wrathfully turned his back, and went to the lowest seat in the orchestra. In that part of the service in which Laurentii performed his concerto, Veracini did not play

a note, though he listened with profound attention; and being called upon, would not play a concerto, but asked the old father permission to play a solo at the bottom of the choir, desiring Lanzelli, the violoncellist of Turin, to accompany him: when he played it in such a manner as to excite the most extraordinary enthusiasm and cries of 'E viva!' in the public church. Whenever he was about to make a close, he turned to Laurentii, with an ironical smile, and called out, 'Così si suona per fare il primo violini!'—'This is the way to play the first fiddle!' Many absurd stories of a similar nature are related concerning the arrogance of this eminent violinist, who was usually complimented with the title 'Capo pazzo' (Crack-brain). He had travelled all over Europe, and gained a perfectly original style. The peculiarities in his performance were his bow-hand, his learned arpeggios, and a tone so loud and clear that it could be distinguished through the most numerous band in a church or theatre. He had been for some years in the service of the King of Poland, and was for a considerable time at different courts of Germany. He had visited England when Farinelli was here, when he had composed several operas. Burney heard him lead the band at a concert in Hickford's Room, in a style he had never before witnessed.

Veracini composed an opera, 'Roselinda,' which Lord Middlesex produced after the eighth performance of 'Alfonso.' The music, wild, awkward, and unpleasant as it was, carried this work through twelve nights. As a composer, he had a certain degree of whim and caprice; but his freaks were built on a good foundation. He then composed another opera—'L'Errore di Solomone'—which was represented only twice; and 'Aristodamo,' a pasticcio. This was succeeded by another opera ('Aloeste') by Lampugnani, which concluded the season.

Festing, who led the orchestra alternately with Veracini during Lord Middlesex's management, was a German violinist, and composed for his instrument. He was a pupil of Ge-

miniani. His works are little known, having been originally sold by private subscription. To Festing belongs the principal merit of establishing the fund for the support of decayed musicians and their families. This society was founded in 1738, and took its rise from an affecting incident. Festing was seated one day at the window of the Orange coffee-house, situate at the corner of the Haymarket, when he noticed a very intelligent-looking boy, driving an ass and selling brickdust. The child was in rags, a miserable object: Festing made inquiries, and discovered that he was the son of an unfortunate musician. Filled with the deepest grief that the child of a brother professional could be reduced to such destitution, Festing determined to spare no effort to rescue the unhappy little vagrant. He consulted his friend Dr. Morico Green; and these worthy men soon succeeded in establishing a fund towards the support of decayed musicians and their families. Handel took a great interest in the society: he gave a benefit for it in 1739, when 'Alexander's Feast' was performed, and he not only gave the house gratis, but composed and played a new concerto. Heidegger made a present of twenty pounds to defray incidental expenses on this occasion.

Handel, finding the theatre in the Haymarket unoccupied in November, 1744, engaged it for the performance of oratorios, which he began November 3, and continued, with heavy loss, till the 23rd of April, 1745.

Soon after this, Veracini quitted England. He was shipwrecked, and lost all his effects, including his two Steiners, esteemed the best in the world. In his usual light way, he called one of these instruments St. Peter and the other St. Paul.

The rebellion in 1745 caused the Opera-house to be shut up. A popular prejudice existed against the performers, who, being foreigners, were chiefly Roman Catholics. An Opera was opened, April 7th, at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, under the direction of Francesco Geminiani. Prince Lobkowitz, who

was at this time in London, and who was passionately fond of music, attended all the rehearsals, with the celebrated and mysterious Count Germain. Pasquali led; 'and I remember,' says Dr. Burney, 'at a rehearsal, Geminiani taking the violin out of his hands, to give him the style and expression of the symphony to a song, which had been mistaken when first led off. And this was the first time I ever saw or heard Geminiani.' The opera was a pasticcio, called '*L'Incostanza De-lusa.*' Signora Frasi, and Signora Galli—a bold, masculine-looking woman, who performed the first male part—were the principal singers. Count St. Germain composed several new songs for the piece, one of which, 'Per pietà bell' idol mio,' sung by Signora Frasi, was encored every night.

Geminiani—a little man, about sixty-five, with a pleasing face, sallow complexion, black eyebrows, and always dressed in blue velvet richly embroidered with gold—was perhaps one of the most singular personages ever heard of in musical history. He was a native of Lucca, and had come to England in 1714; in a short time he had become known to a large circle of amateurs, who were captivated by his exquisite performance, remarkable more particularly for tenderness and pathos. Many noblemen desired to have the honour of being his patron; but he seemed to attach himself most closely to the Baron Kilmansegge, who had been chamberlain to George the First when Elector of Hanover. In 1716 Geminiani published and dedicated to the Baron twelve solos for the violin. His patrons and pupils were so delighted with this work, that they averred it was impossible to decide whether Geminiani was more to be admired as a skilful performer or a fine composer. 'With a due attention to himself,' observes Hawkins, 'there is no saying to what degree he might have availed himself of that favour which his merits had found in this country.' Baron Kilmansegge was so impressed with respect for his abilities, that he endeavoured to obtain for him the patronage of the

King. He mentioned Geminiani to his Majesty, as an exquisite performer, and the author of a work, which he placed before the King, who looked over it, and was so pleased with the music that he expressed a wish to hear some of the pieces performed by the composer. The Baron immediately communicated the King's pleasure to Geminiani. The eminent violinist, though glad to obey such a command, told the Baron that he should like to be accompanied on the harpsichord by Mr. Handel, as no one else could play to satisfy him. Baron Kilmansegge, anxious to give his *protégé* every advantage, respectfully intimated this wish to the King, who ordered that both masters should attend at St. James's. The Baron was very much pleased by this, for he had been watching for an opportunity to reinstate Handel in the King's good graces ever since the performance of the celebrated Water Music, when his Majesty had slightly relented towards his former favourite. The two musicians attended at the palace, when Geminiani justified the praises which had been lavished on him by his kind-hearted friend, and Handel succeeded so far in allaying the anger of King George that he obtained a pension of two hundred a year, in addition to one for the same amount which had been settled on him by Queen Anne. Geminiani was obliged to rely for his income on the bountiful patronage of his friends among the nobility, and the presents and the profits which he gained by teaching, being, fortunately for himself, held in such esteem that he always fixed his own terms. He was seldom heard in public during his long residence in England. He was never engaged to conduct at the Opera, because, from some curious lack of steadiness, and from being so wild and careless a timist, he threw a band into the utmost confusion whenever he attempted to direct. The absorbing passion of his life was painting. To indulge his enthusiastic love for pictures, he neglected his proper studies and the exercise of his talents, involving himself in straits and difficulties

which the slightest degree of prudence would have taught him to avoid. To gratify his taste, he bought pictures, and to supply his wants, he sold them. The result of this irrational system was that he suffered from continual distress and poverty. With the object of securing immunity from arrest, poor Geminiani was fain to avail himself of the protection which the nobility were privileged to give their servants. Being on a visit at the house of the Earl of Essex, one of his pupils, he persuaded his lordship to enrol his name in the list of his domestics. He soon had an opportunity of testing the validity of his claim to security; for he was arrested by a creditor for a small sum, and thrown into the Marshalsea. Geminiani sent a note, through one Forest, an attorney, to a gentleman in Lord Essex's family, who showed the message to the Earl, and was directed to go to the prison and demand Geminiani as the servant of the Earl of Essex. This was done, and Geminiani was set at liberty. It might be imagined that, being perpetually in debt, and harassed by duns, he would have been glad to accept a regular situation, with a fixed income, on any terms; but, although careless and prodigal, Geminiani was not without principle. In 1727, the place of master and composer of the state music in Ireland was vacant by the death of John Sigismund Cousser, a German musician of eminence. The Earl of Essex, by the influence of Lord Percival, obtained a promise of the place from Sir Robert Walpole, which he offered to Geminiani, telling him that his difficulties were now at an end, for that they had provided for him an honourable employment, suited to his profession and abilities, and which would afford him an ample provision for life. Unfortunately, on inquiring into the conditions of the office, Geminiani found that it was not to be held by a Roman Catholic; he therefore declined it, alleging as the reason that he was a member of the Romish Church, and that though he had never made any great pretensions to religion, the thought of renouncing, for the sake

of worldly prosperity, the faith in which he had been baptized, was what he could in no way answer to his conscience. As Geminiani thus positively refused the place, it was bestowed on Mr. Matthew Dubourg, a young man who had been one of his pupils, and who was a distinguished performer on the violin. At this period Geminiani was at the height of his fame. He had in 1726 published his opera terza, consisting of six concertos for the violin, the last of which was looked upon as one of the finest compositions of the kind in the world. He was considered to be without a rival in his profession; but he benefited very little by the profits that accrued from the publication of his works. The manuscript of his opera seunda was surreptitiously obtained by Walsh, who was about to print it, when the notion struck him that it might be an advantage to have the corrections of the author. He wrote to Geminiani, giving him the alternative of correcting the work, or having the mortification of seeing it appear before the public with such faults as would seriously injure it. At first Geminiani was in a passion at this insult, and rejected it with scorn; he instituted a process in the Court of Chancery for an injunction against the sale of the book, but Walsh compounded the matter, and the work was published under the supervision of the composer. The opera terza he parted with for a certain sum to Walsh, who printed it, and in an advertisement gave the purchaser the satisfaction of knowing that he had come honestly by the copy.

The speculation into which Geminiani entered at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket was a complete failure. He was utterly ignorant of the business of the orchestra, and had not the least conception of the labour and unwearyed attention required to instruct vocal and instrumental performers, nor did he understand anything of the practical details of operatic business. The performances did not continue more than nine or ten nights; and this was Geminiani's first and last attempt at playing the perplexing part of Opera

Director. It is difficult to conjecture what could have suggested to him the idea of undertaking it.

About fifteen years later, Geminiani visited Ireland, to pass some time with his pupil and friend Dubourg. He went for a sojourn of some weeks with another pupil, Squire Coote (afterwards Lord Bellamonte), at Coot-hill, in the north of Ireland. Here a ridiculous adventure befel him. Mr. Joseph Younger, an actor, was then on a summer excursion with a company of itinerants, who were in a very impoverished state, and he informed Mr. Coote of their pitiable condition, when that gentleman ordered a play to be performed in a stable the next evening for their benefit. Geminiani was persuaded by Mr. Coote to attend the entertainment at the rural theatre. When the little company assembled they found, to their dismay, that they were without a musician, and they were consulting as to what should be done, when, to their joy, a little girl appeared, leading a blind man, who carried a 'crowdy'—a species of rude violin—under his coat. He was immediately engaged, and placed on a stool behind the scenes. After twanging his instrument, to put it in tune, he drew from the strings a series of horrible discords. All eyes turned instinctively to Geminiani, who stopped his ears, and even then writhed and groaned with torture. The poor fiddler, being informed by some wags behind the scenes that the greatest violinist in the world was in the pit with Squire Coote, and was in raptures with the excellence of his playing, became more energetic. The great musician sprang from his seat, his features distorted with convulsive agony at the harsh grating 'torn and rasped from the vilest of instruments,' and implored Mr. Coote to order the carriage to take him away. The young squire, in ecstacies with the fun, refused to comply with his request; and the fiddler, hearing the shouts, the clapping of hands, the roar from every part of the house, fancying that he was creating a marvellous sensation, played the louder, especially when he was told that the squire was delighted with his performance. At

last the squire's fits of laughter became so alarmingly violent, that his mother commanded the fiddler to terminate his performance, on pain of her weighty displeasure; so Geminiani was relieved. The bell rang, the curtain drew up, and Younger, in the character of Lord Townley (in the 'Provoked Husband'), was discovered seated at a table. His soliloquy being finished, Lady Townley entered, when he should have said, 'Going out so soon this morning, madam?' but an unforeseen accident broke the thread of his discourse. There was no raised stage, in consequence of the place not affording space for such a convenience, and the ground was a new-laid malt-house floor. When the actor attempted to advance towards his lady, the high heels of his theatrical shoes stuck in the new-made floor, and so tenacious was the clay, that, although he extricated himself, 'he was obliged to leave his shoe fixed in the mire, until with might and main he compelled the earth to yield up his property.' In utter confusion he ran off the stage, so furious that he said he would have had the greatest satisfaction and pleasure in kicking Lady Townley out of the stable, horsewhipping his sister, the mild Lady Grace, and in pulling his friend Manly by the nose. This ludicrous accident caused the performance to be suspended for some time. Even Geminiani forgot his own misfortunes, and joined in the shouts of laughter. When Younger returned he was so irate that every smile he detected on the countenances of the audience appeared to be specially directed against himself.

On returning to Dublin, a fatal mishap befel Geminiani. He had devoted some years to composing an elaborate treatise on music; but a female servant—recommended to him, it is said, for the purpose—treacherously abstracted the manuscript from his chamber and it was never recovered. Unable to repair his loss, Geminiani pined away, and soon after died.

The arrival of Gluck was the principal event which distinguished the season of 1746. His father was

master of the chase to Prince Lobkowitz, and as the prince was at this time in London, it is probable that he partly induced Gluck to come over in 1745. January 7, 1746, was produced the 'Caduta de' Giganti,' which was performed before the Duke of Cumberland, in compliment to whom the piece was written and composed. Gluck was then thirty-two. He was not very prepossessing in aspect, being terribly pitted with small-pox, and exceedingly coarse in figure and face. At rehearsal he was perhaps one of the most curious-looking gentlemen imaginable. In character he was frank and open, but

hot and choleric. His impatience knew no bounds when his airs were not executed in the style and expression in which he composed them. 'You sing that air very *loud*,' said he one day bluntly to a prima donna, 'but don't flatter yourself that you sing it very well.' He was thoroughly obstinate and unyielding, and always pursued his way amid difficulties which would have been insuperable to anybody else. During his residence in London he associated much with Dr. Arne and his wife—formerly Miss Brent, a popular opera singer—who exercised a most beneficial influence on the simplicity of



FELICE GIARDINI.—(Page 411.)

his productions. The singers in his 'Caduta de' Giganti' were Monticelli (who left England at the end of this season), Jozzi, and Ciacci, with Signore Imer, Frasi, and Pompeati, afterwards better known under the name of Madame Cornelie. The company was an excellent one, yet the new dances by Auretti and the charming Violetta were much more applauded than the singing. Violetta, afterwards Mrs. Garrick, was born at Vienna, but she looked infinitely more of an Englishwoman

than a German. She was exceedingly dignified, and had a peculiarly graceful walk. Gluck's genius, naturally so great, was yet immature; the piece was not a very good one, and it ran only five nights. He then brought out one of his former operas, 'Artamene,' which was performed ten nights. An opera rarely ran more than ten or twelve nights at that period. When 'Artamene' was withdrawn, Gluck arranged a pasticcio, 'Piramo e Tisbe,' a selection of the most ad-

mired airs from his other works; but as the pieces, when thus collected, were totally inapplicable to the scenic representation, they inevitably lost all their beauty, and the public were greatly disappointed. Soon after the production of this pasticcio, Gluck quitted England, much astonished to find that those airs which had been most effective in the operas for which they were originally composed, were tame and flat when reproduced with other words. Gluck had hitherto followed the then fashionable style and taste of the Italian opera; yet he was conscious of its defects, and felt how little his music, as a whole, could lay claim to real dramatic merit. Indeed Handel declared that his works were detestable. The chief obstacle to the attainment of true dramatic perfection by the composer was the empty and disconnected character of the poetry. It was not till he accidentally made the acquaintance of a man who had the boldness and energy to strike into an independent path as a librettist, that Gluck was inspired to do the same as a musician.

In the autumn of 1746, Reginelli first appeared on the London Opera stage, in a pasticcio called 'Annibale in Capua.' He was an old but great singer; his voice, as well as person, was in ruin. He was now over fifty years of age; his voice, a soprano, was cracked, and in total decay; his figure was tall, raw-boned, and gawky; yet there were fine remains of an excellent school in his taste and manner of singing. He had some refinement in his embellishments and expression 'which cannot be described,' says Dr. Burney, 'and which I have never heard from any other singer. In a cantabile his taste, to those who had places near enough to hear his rafforamenti, was exquisite.' Unfortunately, the numerous imperfections of his voice and figure disgusted those who could bear only the worst part of his performance. The rest of the singers this season were very indifferent, consequently there was nobody to supply Reginelli's deficiencies. The singers were Borosini, Triulzi, and Ciacchi, with Pirkar, a

German woman of small abilities, and Signore Casarini and Frasi, then in an inferior class.

Two new composers came to England at the close of 1746, Paradies, a pupil of Porpora, and Terradellas, Ternadeglia, or Terradeglia. They were very unfortunate in not finding singers capable of performing their works. Terradellas was especially clever, and so sensitive about his productions, that he died at Rome in 1751, of grief at the bad success of one of his operas.

The Earl of Middlesex, who, till the winter of 1747, had been patentee and sole director of the Opera, was then joined by several noblemen at the beginning of that season. They opened a general subscription: the first in November, for six nights only; the second in December, for ten; the third in January, for seventeen; and the fourth in March, for fourteen nights. The season was commenced with 'Fetonte,' or Phæton, a new opera, set by Paradies, the drama being written by Vanneschi, afterwards manager, to which was prefixed a Discourse on Operas, inscribed to the Earl of Middlesex. November, 1747, the Little Theatre in the Haymarket was opened by some unemployed or discontented performers, who brought out an opera entitled 'L'Ingratitudine Punita.' After the second night, however, the speculation was abandoned.

Reginelli was still first male singer, and Signor Galli, who had made a favourable impression in Handel's 'Judas Maccabaeus,' was leading female performer. Early in 1748, during the last year of the reign of Lord Middlesex, Gaetano Guadagni arrived in England. He was a wild and careless singer, though he had a full and well-toned voice. He attracted the notice of Handel, who assigned him the parts in his oratorios of 'Samson' and the 'Messiah' originally written for Mrs. Cibber. He remained for several years in London, during which time he was more remarkable for singing English than Italian. When he played in an English opera called the 'Fairies,' Garrick took much pleasure in forming him as an actor. He had a

noble-looking, elegant figure, and a handsome and intelligent countenance; his attitudes were so full of grace and dignity that they would have been excellent studies for a sculptor. He had a delicious voice and irreproachable taste. His temper, unfortunately, was capricious, obstinate, and unyielding; he was perpetually quarrelling with the manager, his fellow-singers, and the public, and involving himself in difficulties, though he was lavishly generous and very good-natured towards those whom he liked. Soon after his arrival, Cuzzoni, now grown old, poor, and miserable, worn down with infirmities, her once magnificent voice grown thin and cracked, reappeared upon the scene of her former triumphs. She was engaged at the King's Theatre to sing in the opera of 'Mithridate,' composed by Terradellas, but she disgusted those who came anticipating pleasure.

The noble directors found themselves considerable losers by their speculation in the Opera, and obliged to make up all deficiencies in the shape of salaries and general expenses. The season wore on heavily, and the Earl of Middlesex was again a loser to a large amount. May 14 the house was shut up, although three popular operas had been tried.

When the Earl of Middlesex relinquished the Opera management, Dr. Croza came into possession. Like his predecessor, he has left no records of his life.

In the spring of that year there arrived in England a young musician, who was destined to mark a new era in the history of instrumental music in this country. This was Felice Giardini. He was then thirty-three, and he had acquired a splendid reputation on the Continent. His first appearance in public was at a benefit concert for Cuzzoni, May 18, at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. There were very few people present, as nobody cared about the dilapidated old ex-prima donna, who had besought public assistance in her distress; yet when Giardini played a solo of Martini of Milan's composition, 'the applause was so long and loud,' says

Dr. Burney, 'that I never remember to have heard such hearty and unequivocal marks of approbation at any other musical performance whatever.' The doctor had met him the night before at a private concert, with Guadagni and Signora Frasi, at the house of an amateur named Franks, who was himself one of the best dilettante performers on the violin at that time. 'We were all equally surprised and delighted with the various powers of Giardini, at so early a period of his life; when, besides solos of his own composition, of the most brilliant kind, he played several of Martini's in manuscript, at sight, and at five or six feet distance from the notes, as well as if he had never practised anything else. His tone, bow, execution, graceful carriage of himself and instrument; playing some of my own music, and making it better than I intended, or had imagined it in the warm moments of conception; and, at last, playing variations extempore, during half an hour, upon a new but extraordinary kind of birthday minuet, which accidentally lay on the harpsichord; all this threw into the utmost astonishment the whole company, who had never been accustomed to hear better performers than Festing, Brown, and Collet.'

After her unprofitable concert, the wretched old singer—poor Cuzzoni, erst the flattered and admired prima donna, who had received the homage of all Europe, had defied Handel, thrown London into a fever, beheld the rank and fashion of the haughtiest country in the world at her feet, seen the dress of one of her favourite characters adopted as a uniform by the fair and youthful aristocracy of England, insolently refused to accept princely salaries, and who had recklessly flung herself into all kinds of extravagancies and eccentricities and audacities—poor improvident Cuzzoni retired to Italy, there to drag on a pitiable existence by making buttons, until she expired in a public hospital.

Giardini led the Opera band, into which he introduced new discipline, and a new style of playing, far superior in itself and more congenial with

the poetry and music of Italy than the languid manner of his predecessor, Festing. A dramatic composer named Ciampi came almost immediately after Giardini's arrival. His works were indifferent, and full of commonplace passages. During the season nothing of any importance was produced, nor were there any singers of distinction, with the exception of Guadagni and Signora Frasi—and the former was still young, and to a great extent unfinished, while the latter was not held in much estimation. At the beginning of the next season, November, 1749, there was a schism at the theatre, and the composer, with the principal singers, quarrelled with Dr. Croza, quitted his establishment in a huff, and erected their standard at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, where they performed a new comic opera, set by Ciampi, called 'Il Negligente,' nine times. Dr. Croza, with his remaining staff, brought out a burletta at the end of January—'Madama Ciana,' composed by Latilla in 1744 for Venice, where it had achieved a brilliant success; but here it was so frigidly received that it did not survive the second night. Almost all the comic operas of that period, when transplanted from Italy to the colder clime of England, failed. Dr. Burney ascribes the reason to 'our natural aversion to being told what we should admire'; but it is more probably to be found in the simple cause that the light, local fun of one country is not to be understood or appreciated by the natives of another, as is proved by the almost utter impossibility of conveying a just idea of the jokes and good sayings of a foreign nation; for when translated or explained they are either given in a different form or lose their zest.

Several other pieces were pro-

duced; but, although Guadagni and Frasi sang in them, they failed one after another.

Dr. Croza, finding that the dark cloud which had obscured the operatic atmosphere for four years would not disperse, determined to rid himself of his responsibilities in a very summary manner. April 7, 1750, he took a personal benefit, and then ran away, leaving the performers and innumerable tradespeople and others largely in debt. He disappeared altogether; and an advertisement was inserted in the 'Daily Advertiser,' May 15, signed by Henry Gibbs, a tea merchant in Covent Garden, offering a reward of thirty pounds to any one who would secure his person. This event put an end to operas of all kinds for some time.

Among fashionable musical entertainments then in vogue was the Ridotto, first introduced in 1722. It consisted of a selection of songs—sung chiefly by Senesino, Baldassari, Salvai, and Mrs. Anastasia Robinson. On the conclusion of the concert, the performers on the stage joined the company in the pit by means of the bridge that connected the two, which was the signal for the commencement of a ball: this terminated the amusements of the evening. Ranelagh Gardens at Chelsea were built and opened for musical performances in 1742. They were the original speculation of Mr. Lacy, joint patentee with Garrick in Drury Lane Theatre. They were prettily planned, and extended down to the Thames; a superb orchestra, from which concerts of vocal and instrumental music were given, was erected in the centre of a capacious rotunda, with boxes for refreshment in the interior, in which part of the company sat, while the rest promenaded in full dress before them.

E. C. C.



NOTES DRAWN ON THE AVON BANK FOR GENERAL  
CIRCULATION.

WHEN these pages first meet the public eye, the festivities with which it is intended to celebrate the completion of three hundred years from the birth of Shakespeare will be at their height. Thousands of visitors will—if the inhabitants of Stratford be not grievously disappointed—have poured into that quiet town, intent on demonstrating their reverence for the memory of our national poet by all manner of loud talking, by earnest eating and drinking, by play-acting, music, and dancing,—in short, by availing themselves of all those means of making merry and enjoying themselves which are being carefully provided, after the fashion in which from time immemorial the English people have worshipped the objects of their adoration, burning grateful incense always in the proportion of one to the idol and two to themselves.

But of all those who by road or rail, afoot or mounted, will thus go pilgrimaging to the poet's land, it is not probable that any one will reach Stratford by the mode of transit which first conveyed me there; for Stratford at that time had no railway, or at least if it had one the people of Stratford refused to admit the fact, or to call it anything but a tramway. And by this tram from the village of Moreton-in-Marsh, some fifteen miles away, the present writer first made his way to the Shakespearian shrine. His recollections of that ride are a curious combination of the impressions made by travelling by coach and travelling by rail. The journey was performed outside an ordinary railway carriage which had been adapted to the necessities of horse-fraction. It was fitted with box for driver, and seats beside him for passengers. Attached to the carriage in front was a platform, on which the sagacious horse (the only locomotive used on the Stratford and Moreton Railway) mounted when it had drawn our carriage to the top of an incline, thus escaping being tripped up as we

descended at a rattling good speed. The Inspectors of the Board of Trade not having discovered this tramway, the occurrence or non-occurrence of accidents was left chiefly to the goodness of Providence. When we came to the foot of the incline the guard applied his break as tightly as he could, we all, to the best of our individual capacities, held on to our seats, and if we had taken firm hold we thus managed to avoid being pitched off head foremost. When the carriage came to a stand, the horse dismounted and drew us along as before. There was a tunnel too, on approaching which the driver was kind enough to suggest that such of the outside passengers as thought it likely they would have any further use for their brains should duck their heads as low as possible, and carry their hats in their hands. And thus, following chiefly the course of the river Stour, we wound very pleasantly through shady lanes where the high hedge-rows, forming a grateful screen from the hot sun, could be reached by the hand on either side. Or we ran along the public highway, not separated from it by any fence, stopping now and then to take up or set down a wayfarer or to refresh our thirsty selves with beer. At what pace we went, or whether that pace would be most approximately calculated in miles to the hour, or hours to the mile, we hardly know. It was all so very pleasant, and seemed to last so long,—we are of opinion that, except on the break-neck inclines, no great despatch was either sought after or obtained, and it would generally have been quite safe to get down and walk a little. There was always pleasant matter for speculation, too, as to what county we were in at that particular moment. For, starting in Gloucestershire, we found ourselves presently in Worcestershire, forthwith in Warwickshire, then for another breathing space in Worcestershire, anon again in Gloucestershire, back

into Worcestershire, thence once more into Gloucestershire, until at last the graceful spire of Stratford rising before us, we trundled across the beautiful Avon, and ended our journey in Warwickshire,—the shires in these parts being intermixed very singularly, and we having in our short journey made no less than seven changes of this kind. Since then we have visited Stratford many scores of times, having, in fact, come to be almost a townsman of that place, but never again have we journeyed, or shall we journey there so pleasantly. The tramway, it is true, still exists, and is worthy the attention of all archaeologists; but passengers to Stratford no longer pass over its ancient, perilous rails. It exists only as a superseded idea. Its modest glories have paled before those of the modern and quite uninteresting railways which have pierced Stratford from the north and from the south.

So that our visitor does reach Stratford, however, it matters but little in what way. We take it for granted that he, coming amongst us as a stranger at this special time, has in reality but one idea connected with the place he is visiting. With him ‘Stratford-upon-Avon’ is not so much a topographical name as a personal one. To him Stratford and Shakespeare are convertible terms, as they are to nineteen-twentieths of the people who read books. All that we know of Shakespeare the man is so dim and shadowy that after we have put together all the items of knowledge which the research of centuries has been able to amass, we seem to have got but one great central fact by which to hold firmly,—that it was here, namely, here in this very town, that Shakespeare lived, and wrote, and died. And it is certain that all who go to Stratford with this one fixed idea will be likely to depart with it more firmly rooted than ever. They will, it is true, have realized to themselves that Stratford is demonstrably something more than a name;—that it is an actual place still existent on the face of the earth, with latitude and longitude of its own;—a real English town made up of streets and houses ex-

tremely like those of other English towns;—nay, that it is blessed even with a mayor and corporation, with a local board of health, a vestry, a tax-gatherer, bellman, a policeman, a pair of stocks,—with all, in short, that marks an advanced stage of civilized society and stamps the town a substantial prosaic fact, with no more of myth about it than there is about Hackney or Brentford. But over and above all this we venture to predict there will be the old feeling stronger than ever that Stratford is not the name of a place but the alias of a man. All that the visitor sees around him,—all that he hears,—all that he reads,—all that is done will have relation more or less directly to this man. He will observe how the people of this little town have exerted themselves to erect an elegant pavilion to seat five thousand people,—have built it surely with credit to the town and to the local architects,—have abandoned all other pursuits for the sake of celebrating with the greater honour, according to their lights and to the degrees of wisdom with which they are blessed, this great national festival. Behind this fact, and serving as an effective background to bring all into bolder relief, he will remember that Stratford, viewed in relation to this festivity, is the centre, not of England only, not even of Europe only, but we may say without magniloquence, of the whole world. That in all the busiest cities of England there are gatherings more or less enthusiastic in celebration of this tercentenary day;—that in Germany, in France, in America, in far-off India;—wherever the English language is read or spoken, companies of men are assembled, proud to call themselves countrymen of Shakespeare;—proud, if not his countrymen, of their power to read his words,—and that in all these places, and amongst all these men, there is a disposition to turn and look in one direction, and that, as the Moslem turn and bow towards Mecca, these are saying from time to time how they wish they could look in upon the doings at Stratford.

And if the stranger be of a sanguine, enthusiastic disposition he

may persuade himself that here at last he has come upon an intellectual Utopia,—here he has found a prophet who has honour amongst his own people, and a people who rightly appreciate and glory in the distinction that attaches to their home. Let him attempt these beautiful ideas, however, before he leaves. They are too pleasing to be enjoyed without some alloy. We people of Stratford-upon-Avon are not, as a rule, more effusive or sentimental than you people of 'Stratford-atte-Bowe.' We pass the birthplace itself without so much as looking up at it. When we meet over our glass and our pipe our talk is of heifers and teggs, of the price of beans and oats, of the prospect of a railway being made through the neighbouring parishes, of anything, in short, rather than of Shakespeare. From the Forest of Arden, from Wilmcote, from Snitterfield, from Welford (where there is to this day an actual may-pole still to be seen), from 'drunken Bidford,' from 'haunted Hilbro,' from 'dancing Marston,' we jog to market at Stratford, never thinking that these are classic names. Charlecote, with its fine old house, with its river flowing tranquilly as it flowed three hundred years ago, with its park (scene, as is so persistently and agreeably believed, of the apotheosis of poaching)—with all its associations, is no ground of romance to us. It is merely the seat of Squire Lucy, who drove past just now, and whose mare we thought was going a little stiff on the off leg,—who is not at all ashamed to bear the name and to be of the family of him who has with one consent been identified as the justice who is best known by a name evidently not given him on account of his wisdom. When the tourist joins us at our market dinner we know him at once. And when he attempts to turn the conversation into a Shakespearian channel his failure is often signal. 'Known to Americans as Washington Irving's hotel,' he will say, reading the headline of our host's hotel bill. And then he asks us how it comes to be so known. We tell him 'Because Washington Irving once stayed here

for a week,—you will see his room on the other side the passage,—you will see a fire-poker on which is engraved "Geoffrey Crayon's sceptre,"—you will see old William the waiter, who will tell you all about it.' And then he withdraws to the other side of the passage, and the conversation reverts to the subject of crops or cattle. Nay, here are even those amongst us who speak irreverently of the coming celebrations. 'Well, Mr. B——,' we said but yesterday, 'and what do you think of all these preparations; — taken all your tickets?' And Mr. B——'s reply was one which we fear will move England to indignation—'Tom-foolery,' he said, 'a lot of tom-foolery.' But of course Mr. B—— is in a minority, though hardly, we believe, in a minority of one.

Nor, indeed, are all the strangers who look in upon us, strangers who come thinking of Shakespeare only. Frequently there are cheap trips to Stratford. Such a one, on Easter Monday just now passed, brought us from Birmingham and Staffordshire about a thousand people. Of these but little over a hundred visited the house in which Shakespeare was born, and only about half a hundred went to look at his tomb. It should be explained, however, that there were unusual counter-attractions. It happened that on this particular day the basins of the canal were empty and a number of workmen were engaged clearing them of mud. To watch so interesting an operation from two to three hundred of the visitors stood on the wharves for hours. They rewarded with vociferous applause the lucky captor of any eel or other fish which had not succeeded in burying itself. They were not deterred even by the pelting rain from supporting with their presence these industrious labours and researches. It is quite possible, therefore, that if the basins had not happened to require mudding, or if there had been fewer little fishes for the boys to hunt, more of the visitors might have found time for Shakespeare.

During the tercentenary festivals it is not likely that similar distractions will arise. Visitors will be free to surrender themselves to the more

legitimate attractions of the town and its neighbourhood. In the intervals of banqueting, theatricals, and concerts, they will pay due oblations at the local shrines, and make patient pilgrimages from scene to scene. Lest they should not be provided with a suitable guide-book, we make quotations from the 'Visitors' Guide to Stratford-upon-Avon,' as it appears week by week in our local newspaper, 'The Stratford-upon-Avon Chronicle';—for we are to this day a literary people, and support two weekly papers here. The principal points of attraction are described as follows:—

\* *Shakespearian Relics at Mrs. James's, corner of High Street.*

'Visitors are invited by the proprietor to inspect the curious and invaluable relics of the immortal Shakespeare, removed from his birthplace in 1820, where they had been shown for a century previously, including a plaster representation in relief of the Battle between David and Goliath, together with the First Visitors' Book, commencing in 1812, to the present period, including autographs of George IV., William IV., Duke of Wellington, Lord Byron, Louis Philippe, Sir Walter Scott, Hogg, Kean, Washington Irving, and other eminent individuals.'

[It is not on the face of it quite clear in what way a 'plaster representation of the Battle between David and Goliath,' or even an autograph of the above-named 'first gentleman,' are 'curious and invaluable relics of the immortal Shakespeare,' nor how many of these autographs could have been 'shown for a century previously' to 1820. But no doubt this will be all explained at the corner of High Street.]

\* *Shakespeare's Hall, corner of Chapel Street.*

'Here may be seen an admirable full-length painting, by Wilson, of Shakespeare in the attitude of inspiration: the one by Gainsborough, of Garrick reclining gracefully upon a pedestal, idolizing the poet's bust. Both these paintings were presented by Garrick and his wife to the corporation.'

[This is especially worthy the attention of youthful poets, as it will show them what is precisely the proper 'attitude of inspiration,' and the position which it is right to assume when 'idolizing' a bust.]

\* *Jones's Phusiglyptic Museum, Bull Lane.*

'A cursory visit may be made to this person, who is a connoisseur, and a self-taught carver of grotesque figures of the creation, made from nature's curious roots and branches, and contains also, portraits of many eminent men.'

[One cannot but feel the most profound respect for any gentleman who keeps a phusiglyptic museum, 'who is a connoisseur, and contains also, portraits of many eminent men.' We are astonished that the editor should speak of him as 'this person.' We commend Mr. Jones to the immediate attention of the committee of the National Portrait Gallery.]

\* *The Falcon Tavern, opposite the Guild Chapel.*

'Mentioned by Dr. Drake, in his "Noontide Leisures," as having been kept, in Shakespeare's time, by one Julius Shaw; also, in Ireland's "Avon," Brewer's "Warwickshire," and other works. In the smoke-room, where there is no doubt the immortal bard has oft been heard to say "Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?" is the wainscoting from New Place.'

[It is not pleasant to learn that Shakespeare was in the habit of spouting his own works at a public-house; but no doubt the editor speaks with authority. We must be content to take our great men as we find them.]

*The Birthplace of Shakespeare, Henley Street.*

'This national property has recently undergone considerable improvement, both in the house and the garden that surrounds it. The garden in which the house stands is laid out, and planted with trees and shrubs, all of which have a Shakespearian association, by being selected from those mentioned by the dramatist in his works.'





SHAKESPEARE



THE DROESHOUT PORTRAIT



HIS BIRTH PLACE



OLD CHAPEL & NEW PARISH

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE



SP 2

HIS

SP 2

LAMME

SHAKESPEARE



HIS BIRTH PLACE



ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE

THE CHANDOS  
PORTRAIT



NORTH PORCH AVENUE

1. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*  
2. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

3. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*  
4. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

5. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*  
6. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

7. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*  
8. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

9. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

10. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

11. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

12. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

13. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

14. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

15. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

16. *Contra* *adversarios* *de* *rebus* *christianis*

[To which it may be added that the bricks with which the house has lately been repaired have also 'a Shakespearian association,' bricks being no doubt somewhere mentioned by the dramatist in his works, although the present annotator has not time to look out a passage.]

'Site of New Place, the end of Chapel Street.

'This was the retired residence of the Bard of Avon, and the scene of his last hours. Also the spot where he planted his celebrated mulberry-tree, which was ordered to be cut down by the Rev. F. Gastrell, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants and the numerous admirers of the matchless bard. It was converted into goblets, boxes, tobacco-stoppers, &c.'

[We do not observe that the tercentenary programme provides for the utterance of a solemn groan in memory of the Rev. Francis Gastrell. This seems to be an omission.]

'*Ann Hathaway's Cottage, Shottery, three-quarters of a mile from the town.*

'Shakespeare's wife, the daughter of a substantial yeoman, was born at this rural village in 1556, the house being still in a good state of preservation. Anne Hathaway (eight years older than her husband) married Shakespeare in his nineteen year, with whom she passed some years of her life in domestic obscurity, till an extravagance that he was said to have been guilty of, forced him out of Warwickshire, and he sought refuge in London, where being thrown into the company of theatricals, first gave him a taste for the drama, and thereby produced those works which have immortalized his name.'

[Visitors could hardly choose a pleasanter walk than that across the fields to Shottery. It will afford them a charming view of Stratford church. They will find, too, that Anne Hathaway's cottage was not only, as the above extract implies, 'in a good state of preservation,' when she was born there, but that it is so to this day.]

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The 'Visitors' Guide' does not mention the Church of the Holy Trinity. But this also is thought by many to be well worthy of a cursory inspection. By not a few, indeed, it is thought better worthy of inspection than anything else in the way of a shrine within the bounds of Europe. For it is here, in front of the altar, that we see the stone which covers all that is mortal of Shakespeare—the stone which bears the famous inscription which has probably been oftener quoted than any other epitaph ever written;\*—here, side by side with that of Shakespeare, are, as every one knows, the tombs of his wife, his daughter, and others of his family. There from above looks down the bust, addressing the reader—

\* Stay, passenger; why goest thou by so fast? † Around are the tombs of the Combe family, the Cloptons, not a few others of unusual interest, the church being surprisingly rich in its epitaphs and monuments. In the vestry the parish register opens of itself at the pages which record the birth and death of 'Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere.' The birth is

\* The other day a German gentleman, type, we suppose, of the 'intelligent foreigner' of whom we frequently hear, after haranguing with much enthusiasm, though not in very good English, on the excellences of Shakespeare, asked the writer to recite to him this inscription, which he wished to take down in writing. He had been in the church, but had forgotten to copy it, perhaps forgotten to look at it, and, now he had got back to the hotel, he wanted it. He took it down from our dictation, and when he had finished we looked at his note-book. The memoranda which he had made for his own misguidance ran thus:—

'Good fren for Jesus sake for bare  
To dig dust enclose a tear  
Blest be the man what spare these stone  
And cursed be he what move my bone.'

He said his wife would be delighted with it. (We assure the reader this is not exaggerated, and we are sorry for it.)

† We don't like foot-notes, but we must make another. It is curious to notice how this word *passenger* has altered. Any one who had missed his train, and arrived foot-sore at the end of his journey, would now feel it satirical if he were addressed, 'Stay, passenger.'

entered in Latin as above, but the quality of this Latin not being first-rate, a laudable economy of it has been exercised in subsequent years, and when we come to the entry of his death, it is in English.

The visitor who goes much about in Warwickshire can hardly fail to notice that Shakespeare is still one of the commonest names in that county. The writer paid his poor-rates, a little while ago, and has got a receipt signed 'William Shakespeare.' Indeed there is a certain set of names which are continually turning up in the neighbourhood. Shakespeare's house is in Henley Street. His mother's maiden name was Arden. At Henley-in-Arden, eight miles from Stratford, there are three or four Shakespeares. One of them, we see, appears to glory in the old uncertainty as to the way in which the name ought to be written. He describes himself as Shakspur on the door of his house, and Shakespeare on the sign above the door. The name of Hathaway, and Hathway, is still a common one in the district. The occupant of the cottage at Shottery does not bear that name, but claims to be a descendant of the original Hathaways, and says the cottage has never passed out of possession of her family.

Finally, to complete our guidance, let us earnestly advise the stranger

not to leave Stratford without having, if possible, a short excursion on the river Avon.

One word more, and that in as earnest a tone as we can give it, before we dismiss this subject. Let us remember—all of us who take part in any shape in this tercentenary celebration, that it is not what we do, be it little or be it much, but only the spirit in which we do it, that can do any honour—we will not be so bold as to say to the memory of Shakespeare, for that can be no more affected either by praise or dispraise—but simply to ourselves. It is surely a good thing that a people should thus lay aside for a while the cares of the world that 'is too much with us, late and soon,' and do homage with a prostrate heart to what we have found greatest amongst all our race. The memory of this celebration will live through many generations when all the small squabbles and heartburnings, and professional discords which heralded and attended it will have long been forgotten and forgiven. And the names of some who have laboured hard, not seeking any short-lived notoriety to themselves, but in a spirit of true reverence, will be read hereafter with grateful respect.



## PICTURESQUE LONDON.

## NO. III.—HYDE PARK.

NOT a patch upon it, Mossoo, pretty though I allow your Bois to be; wonderfully improved from the barren old scrap that I remember it, though the new Bois de Boulogne is, with its admirably-kept gardens, its pretty lakes, its trim walks, its bits of boskage and greenery—grand though you imagine it, with its swell company, its sombre-faced, waxed-moustached Emperor, with the pretty woman by his side (a little strained and faded now, that pretty woman, and showing what a long course of difficulties between luxuries and priestcraft will do!), both reclining in their elegant carriage environed by *mouchards* and police-agents, who manage somehow to get rid of that awful stiffness of demeanour which affects everything connected with our English police; with its grand troops of *nouveaux riches* whirling here and there in elegant equipages, and showing in every item of extravagance the recent fortune made hap-hazard through Bourse speculation; with its crowd of equestrians, *jeunes dandys*, with high shirt-collars, horse-shoe pins, tight trousers, and mutton-chop whiskers, like bad imitations of third-rate men about London ten years since; with its white-capped *bonnes* and precocious children already in full flirtation, and dreary old men spitting into red cotton pocket handkerchiefs, and drearier old ladies taking snuff and looking after their Spitz dogs, and *toulourou* soldiers, with very short hair and large ears sticking out of their heads like handles to mugs, and short-tailed jackets, and balloony trousers and tiny feet;—not with all these adjuncts, and a great many more which I have neither the time nor the space to enter upon, Mossoo, is your Bois de Boulogne to be mentioned in the same breath with our Hyde Park. Your place is too new, to begin with. Our little establishment has its history and can point to its ancestors—real, not Brummagem! We were Hyde Manor, be-

longing to the Church of Westminster, until the reign of Henry the Eighth, when we were exchanged—what is vulgarly termed ‘swopped,’—for some Crown property. An ambassador from your sprightly nation hunted in us with our King in 1550; in 1578 the Duke Casimir ‘killed a barren doe in Hyde Park from among three hundred other deer.’ They started horse and foot races round our Ring in Charles the First’s time; and when the gloomy season of the Protectorate was over, and the King had come to his own again, mad-cap Charley made us celebrated for our drives and promenades, a reputation which we have maintained ever since, and will maintain at all hazards, against all comers!

*\* Of all parts of England, Hyde Park hath the name*

*For coaches and horses and persons of fame!'*

Hath, hath had, and shall have, for ever! What historical memories, what stores of anecdotes are connected with the name! Evelyn going to see a ‘coach race in Hide Park,’ and afterwards ‘collationing’ in Spring Garden. Bustling, chatting, active little Mr. Pepys, entering in his notebook that he had gone ‘thence to the Park, my wife and I; and here Sir W. Coventry did first see me and my wife in a coach of our own, and so did also the Duke of York, who did eye my wife mightily.’ Hither was brought Kynaston, an actor who played female parts, and who was ‘so beautiful a youth’ that the ladies of quality prided themselves in taking him with them in their coaches to Hyde Park in his theatrical habit after the play: ‘Which,’ says Colley Cibber, ‘in those days they might have sufficient time to do, because plays were then used to begin at five o’clock, the hour that people of the same rank are now going to dinner.’ Here Oliver Cromwell, attempting to drive six horses which had been recently presented to him by the Earl of Oldenburgh, acting a little too freely with his whip, caused

the team to take fright, and the coach upsetting, was flung to the ground and somewhat severely injured. Here took place that lamentable duel between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun, in which both were killed, and which is so admirably described in Thackeray's 'Esmond'; and here, just a century ago, took place a duel between John Wilkes, of 'North Briton' celebrity, and Samuel Martin, M.P.

*Vede Napoli e poi mori!* See Naples and die, if you like, but do not die without having seen Hyde Park! The country cousin who spends a fortnight in London, wearying himself and his friends with that fourteen days' hard labour, has seen nothing until he has visited Hyde Park in the height of the season, and gazed upon the crowd of carriage occupants, equestrians and pedestrians constantly pouring in under Decimus Burton's triple archway with the Ionic screen which faces that triumphal arch on the top of Constitution Hill, now surmounted by Mr. Matthew Digby Wyatt's hideous bronze equestrian effigy of 'the Dook,' which cost a grateful public sixty thousand pounds. In the whole world there is probably no such sight, no such lavish display of wealth dispensed with such exquisite taste, no such show of elegant equipages and splendid horseflesh, no such gathering of high-bred men and lovely women. Nothing else in London pretends to compete with it. At the Opera and the Horticultural and Botanical fêtes you may see the same men and women, but they are without the horses and carriages, which have a great effect in the *ensemble*. Moreover, at those places you have to pay for admission, whereas, brother of mine, though your name be Lazarus, and though your coat be ever so patched, though your pockets be coinless and your boots cracked, you shall take your place against the iron rails by the Marquis of Montserrat, and calmly criticise to your friend Sans-sous the 'turn-out' of the Duke of Sennacherib. Let the green and gold park-keeper eye you superciliously, not to say suspiciously, oh my friend (and to tell

truth they are a haughty race these park-keepers, and combine the *fierté* of a private soldier with the arrogant exclusiveness of the beadle), but do not mind! so long as your behaviour is circumspect, and your language not obnoxious, these persons cannot interfere with you; and you have the satisfaction of knowing that, from your casual contribution to the levied taxes of the kingdom, you feel to a certain extent towards them in the light of an employer.

But the country cousin on his first visit, the neophyte first making acquaintance with the mysteries of the Park, should have an introducer, some one well acquainted with its ways, else will he be fair to lose himself, and pursue what Mr. Carlyle would call 'mere vain gropings.' Nowhere is the fickleness of Fashion, the mutability of Taste, more seen than in this, their chief resort. Five-and-twenty years ago the place of resort for equipages, horsemen, and pedestrians was that portion of the Ring between Hyde Park Corner and Great Cumberland Street, as it had been for a hundred and twenty years. 'The next place of resort,' says the 'Spectator,' 'wherein the servile world are let loose, is at the entrance of Hyde Park, while the gentry are in the Ring.' And Pope, addressing lock-raped Belinda, says—

'Know, then, unnumbered spirits round her fly,  
The light militia of the lower sky:  
. These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,  
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.'

But before the writer of these pages, during brief holidays snatched at intervals from school, was permitted to look on at the dazzling crowds, Fashion had changed the *locale* to the straight stretch of road between Achilles' statue and the powder magazine, known by the name of the 'Ladies' Mile.' Ah me! these changes in Fashion's quarters, when reflected on, are as melancholy as the crows' feet seen in the dressing-glass creeping slowly round the eyes, or the dropped voice in which your tailor mutters to his assistant the number of inches round your waist—a measure which at one time he would announce in so cheery a tone!

My earliest recollection of the 'Ladies' Mile' extends to a period when it was not thought bad taste to ride or drive on a Sunday; when Lady Blessington, in the evening of beauty so soft and charming as to give one an idea of the resplendent loveliness of its dawn, drove in a very noticeable carriage with the largest of footmen in the most striking of liveries; when Count D'Orsay,—ah! how well I recollect his straight profile and black hair! he was handsome, certainly, but of the hairdressers' dummy order of beauty—drove an admirably-hung dark-green cabriolet, with a high-stepping horse, in very highly plated harness, and with a gin-stunted 'tiger,'—a little wretch in boots and breeches, like a groom seen through the wrong end of an opera-glass, swinging on the footboard behind; when the bystanders would turn from Louis Napoleon (then merely regarded as a thick-headed, silent, brooding, disagreeable exile) to gaze with wonder at poor Lord Cantilupe lounging, in a Sybaritic fashion, along his horse's back; when a whisper would pass round among the strangers that the red-faced merry-looking gentleman in the dark-blue cab was Lord Dolly Fitz-clarence, while his friend and charioteer was his invariable companion, Sir George Wombwell; that the tall man in spectacles on the stout cob was Thackery, a writer in 'Punch,' and that the gigantic man with the handsome face and the keen eye was Jacob Omnium, who had just exposed the abuses of the Palace Court. In those days broughams and clarences were only just commencing to be used, and the Park was filled with banging, swinging chariots in all the glory of gorgeous hammercloth, bewigged coachmen, powder-headed footmen, and plum-pudding-spotted carriage-dog. In those days no man wishing to be well thought of would have been seen walking on the Achilles-statue side of the 'Ladies' Mile,' would have been seen smoking, would have been seen without stiff stand-up gills (a turn-down collar was facetiously supposed to indicate a poetic temperament), without straps which but-

toned under the soles of his Wellington boots, and without—if he were facial-gymnast enough to accomplish it—an eyeglass stuck in his eye. Boats were unknown on the Serpentine in those days, save the mimic fleets sailed by boys; and any one indulging in such athletic exercise as rowing would have been looked down upon as a sad vulgarian. Those were the days when the Coventry Club was the great resort of the dandies, when crowds used to assemble round Apsley House (originally a piece of ground granted by George the Second to an old soldier named Allen, who had fought at the battle of Dettingen, and who kept an apple-stall on it), to witness the mounting and dismounting of the great Duke of Wellington, and to receive the forefinger salutation of the blue-coated, white-trousered veteran, and to cheer the Queen and Prince Albert (the favourite head covering of the latter being then a white hat with a black band), and who drove as frequently in the Park in the season as the Prince and Princess of Wales are now in the habit of doing.

*Mais, nous avons changé tout cela—we, and Time the avenger!* Lady Blessington, D'Orsay, Lord Cantilupe, Lord Dolly Fitzclarence, Sir George Wombwell, Thackery, 'the Dook,' and Prince Albert are dead; the flowing whiskers of Omnium are white; carriage-dogs are seen no more; and straps, eyeglasses, and Wellington boots are ostracised; and Fashion, led by Anonyma and her compoers, has removed the line of carriages and horsemen to the ground between Apsley House and Prince's Gate. There has been no alteration in the position of Rotten Row—that long strip of ground dedicated to horse exercise alone, and into which no carriage, unless appertaining to Royalty, is ever allowed to enter—which stretches from Hyde Park Corner to Kensington, and which is supposed to derive its unsavoury appellation from a corruption of 'Itout du Roi,' or the King's way. Here are to be seen horses and horsemen of all kinds. Sheridan in his prologue to 'Pizarro,' thus describes it—

Horsed in Cheapside, scarce yet the eager  
spark  
Achieves the Sunday triumph of the Park;  
Scarce yet you see him, dreading to be late,  
Scour the New Road, and dash through Gros-  
venor Gate.  
Anxious, yet timorous too, his stied to show,  
The hack Bacchus of Rotten Row.  
Cares less he seems, yet vigilantly shy,  
Woos the stray glance of ladies passing by,  
While his off-heel, insidiously aside,  
Provokes the caper which he seems to chide.'

And so it has continued to this day. From early morn till dewy eve the Row has a certain complement of visitors, for during certain hours of the day it is most thronged, and its frequenters feel it *de rigueur* to be seen there. These hours used to be in the evening, an ante-prandial promenade from half-past five until seven; but some of the leaders of fashion felt that these hours were not sufficiently exclusive—that people from the City, horrible vulgarians engaged in the debasing pursuits of commerce, law, literature, or even trade, might come between the wind and their nobility, enjoying themselves after the day's labours were at an end. This was too terrific, and must at once be rectified; so the exclusives changed the fashionable time to the two hours preceding lunch—between twelve and two—when all the low persons engaged in getting their daily bread would be confined to their counting-houses, law-courts, chambers, desks, or counters, as the case might be; and this rule still continues. So thoroughly has it carried out its intention that all the visitors at the 'swell time' might now be denizens of the Castle of Indolence. They are all drones, among whom the presence of a working bee is never to be found. There you may see the best types of that great creature the British 'swell'—tall, stalwart, strong-limbed, fair-haired, blue-eyed, soft-bearded, not particularly bright, but covering his natural pleasantness with an absurd mask of *insouciance*. There are lovely girls, and plain girls who almost approach to prettiness on horseback, so well are their figures set off by the trim habit, their faces by the neat chimney-pot hat and becoming half-

veil. Search the world through, and you will find nothing like these English Amazons, so healthy, yet so delicately formed, fearless, yet entirely modest, so bright and fresh and happy in her one healthful and natural recreation in the entire round of the season's amusements. Here they come in broad cavalcades, some eight or ten strong, escorted by husbands and lovers, brothers and friends, the fresh summer air blowing out of them all the heat and dust and gaseous atmosphere of hot nights' crammed opera or crowded ball-room, and bringing back for the nonce the roses into their cheeks and the light into their eyes—such roses and such light as fade only too quickly under the life they are leading, and are only renewed by a long course of continual quiet and fresh air. Ah, Mossoo! my foreign friend, whom I apostrophized in the first sentences of this little essay, these young English ladies constitute our crowning triumph over your Bois! You acknowledge it, I know. Often have I seen you wag your little beard and grind your teeth in an ecstasy of delighted animation as the cavalcade whirled by you! The cavalcade in such close-fitting dark-blue habits as none but Poole yet have accomplished, and in the coquetry of those chimney-pots and half-veils, which beat the wide-awakes (once tried, but proved failures) into fits! Sometimes among these cavalcades are to be seen children on ponies—pretty little girls with their Shetland's leading-rein in charge of some steady old family groom ; boys, knickerbockered and gaitered, galloping along by the side of papa's far-stepping hunter—all riding fearlessly, and thoroughly at home in their saddles, as only, in Europe at least, we English people are.

Among the crowd of banded cavalcades you will notice many solitary riders steering their way in and out in lonely self-sufficiency. Some of these are females, generally mounted on showy steeds, and riding them at the top of their pace, followed by very doubtful-looking grooms, under whose shabby livery one seems to recognize a being of a

kindred though slightly different stamp. In most of these instances, *grattez le groom et vous trouverez le flyman* of some Brompton livery-stable, unless, indeed (shame to say!), the servitor in question be, as he very often is, the father of the young woman after whom he rides. The demeanour of these miserable women exhibits the recklessness impelled by shame—the intention of ‘facing it out,’ and as they ride tardily along they stare with closed lips and innocent glance at all, male and female, whom they meet. These are the Anonymas whom certain writers like to patronize in print, and the ‘pretty horsebreakers,’ whom some distinguished painters select for the subjects of their brushes. A rencontre with them causes a great deal of curiosity on the part of lady amazona, and a great deal of confusion on the part of gentlemen cavaliers—caused rather: the past tense, not the present. Thanks to the genial criticisms of a free and enlightened press, the subject is now fully understood in the most retired and innocent classes of society. One would like, however, to see some letters of Mrs. Chapone on this topic; or to read what ‘Little Burney’ would have written about it in her ‘Diary,’ or what Dr. Johnson would have remarked thereon to Topham Beauclerk or Bennet Langton.

Besides the youth of both sexes, all degrees of age are represented among the equestrians. Here may be seen pursy gentlemen of five-and-forty, who laughed and grew fat before the light of Banting dawned upon the world, and who are endeavouring by regular horse exercise to keep down corpulence without depriving themselves of any of the table’s luxuries. They bestride strong, thickset, handsome little cobs—that class of horse advertised by dealers as ‘up to twenty stone—a drayhorse in miniature,’ and go pounding away with the full intention of getting as much jolting as possible into a given quantity of time. And there, too, may be seen really old men, fine old boys who in their time have been great across country, and who still retain a look

of sporting, in their tight blue body-coats and high muslin cravats, but who are no longer capable of much equitation, and are seated on steady old hunters incapable of making a stumble or a mistake, and cantering along at the easiest of ambles. Here, too, may occasionally be seen the Church equitant in the person of a rosy-coloured bishop, with his episcopal legs covered with black gaiters, mounted on a safe, clever cob, and closely followed by a well-fed groom in very sober livery.

Until the last few years there were very few pedestrians in the Row, and these principally friends of the riders or connoisseurs in horseflesh, who would hang negligently over the rails and discourse to each other in those mysterious whispers which sporting men so much affect of the merits or demerits of the passing cattle. But the introduction from the Champs Elysées and the Bois de Boulogne of the light and elegant wire chairs, expressly adapted for out-of-door use, has entirely changed the fashion, and ‘the thing’ is now to hire a chair and sit and watch the passers-by, both horse and foot. Nothing can be pleasanter than this. You sit amongst the best-dressed people in town, the prettiest women and the greatest swells, and see the whole panorama of London out-door life unrolling itself before you. Year by year these chairs have increased in number, until they are now a recognized institution of the Park, and afford a very fair summer livelihood to their proprietors. One row, sometimes a double row, stretches from Hyde Park Corner far up Rotten Row, and in the bright sunlight the colours of the bonnets, parasols, and dresses, harmoniously mingled, give the effect of a brilliant and extensive bed of tulips. In front of these sitters wanders a perpetually varying crowd, men and women of all ages, but all belonging to the richer classes, and all bent on relaxation and amusement. Nothing can be pleasanter than this stroll, provided you have a companion, but the man who would attempt it alone must be bold indeed. To walk

quietly under the fire of a thousand pair of eyes, the handsomest and wickedest in London, requires an amount of moral courage which few possess: the unfortunate cynosure, once started, dare not retreat; but no sooner does he see or fancy he sees some one bend forward to whisper her neighbour, than he immediately considers himself the subject of the remark, is haunted by the horrible idea of a lump on his nose, a crack in his boot, a crease in his coat—*Quelque chose ridicule ou bouffonne*’ (to use Théophile Gautier’s favourite phrase), in his appearance, and, colouring to brightest crimson, he pursues his way amid the ill-suppressed titters of the crowd.

Once past the Serpentine Bridge, which was designed by Rennie, and erected in 1826, and we are in quite a different scene. We are, as Tickell says,

Where Kensington, high o'er the neighbouring lands,  
Midst greens and sweets a regal fabric stands,  
And sees each spring luxuriant in her bower,  
A snow of blossoms and a world of flowers;  
The dames of Britain oft in crowds repair  
To gravel walks and unpolluted air.  
Here, while the town in damps and darkness lies,  
They breathe in sunshine and see azure skies;  
Each walk, with robes of various dyes bespread,  
Seems from afar a moving tulip bed;  
There, rich brocades and glosy damasks glow,  
And chintz, the rival of the showery bough.

But save twice a week, and when the band of the Guards plays on Sundays, you would not find the brave show of company which old Tickell so pleasantly describes. On the contrary, the grand old gardens are still and solemn. Lying in the

verdant bosage, stretched supine under the shadow of some of the giant elms and oaks, one could fancy oneself a hundred miles from London: the eye lights on nothing but greenery: from afar the hum of wheels and voices breaks upon the ear with a pleasant and soothing monotone; and were it not for the occasional flitting by of a lengthy Life-Guardsman exchanging sweet nothings with a dumpy housemaid, one might imagine oneself in a wood—such a wood as these gardens must have been in 1798, when a man was accidentally shot while the keepers were shooting foxes here! and his widow received a pension of 18*l.* a year from the Board of Green Cloth.

Here may be met, wandering idly among the trees, painters mooning over the subjects of their pictures, and authors thinking of the elaboration of their plots; and here, too, may be found close-shaved gentlemen with little rolls of paper in their hands, to which they now and then refer, and who, from their writhings and gesticulations, you would take to be lunatics, if you did not know them to be actors who had walked over from Brompton or Kensington, their favourite resort, and were studying their parts in the quiet shade. Here are children playing on the green-sward, and idlers—doers of nothing doing it well—extended on their backs, calmly gazing up to the sky. Happy the metropolis that has such a large and healthy lung! Good for all—for the rich to flaunt and flirt in, for the poor to take quiet rest and ease—is Hyde Park.





Drawn by T. J. S. 1822.

MAY IN "THE PARK."

See "Petaroma London."





Drawn by F. J. Hill.

MAY IN "THE PARK."

See "Pictorial London."

**STORY FOR LITTLE KIDS**

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"**WILL YOU GIVE ME A TIP?**" HE HAD ASKED HER.

CHAPTER 272

*CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION*

and the world around us is like a  
big ocean. The water is clear and  
blue, and the sun is bright. We can  
see all kinds of fish swimming  
around us. There are also some  
small boats and ships in the water.  
The sky is blue with a few wispy  
white clouds. It's a beautiful day  
to be outside.

## THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

*A Story of London Life.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE STUDY OF ASTRONOMY.

**N**O, child, you must never express any of those strong opinions again. Men don't admire decision in young girls of your age.'

'But Mrs. Strangways is bold-looking, Aunt Thalia, and I did not like to hear Jane Dashwood named with her.'

'Mrs. Strangways not only looks, but is, bold, child. That is just the reason you should not have said what you did. The truer such remarks are, the more reason for young persons abstaining from making them. Mr. Chichester may be *au mieux* with Mrs. Strangways, for anything you know to the contrary; but, at all events, the fact of his having called her pretty, and of her bowing to him in such a friendly manner, were reasons enough to seal your lips. It has a very bad effect for one woman to dispraise another before the man who admires her.'

'But Mr. Chichester is engaged to Jane Dashwood. What can Mrs. Strangways' beauty, or my opinion of her, matter to him?'

'Ta, ta! child, don't be so simple and sentimental. What does a man of thirty—a man of the world like Chichester—think of Miss Dashwood when he is fifty miles away from her? As to the engagement, I don't believe in it. He has not the air of an engaged man at all. Barring his want of means, it would be a very good match for one of Colonel Dashwood's daughters, if they could catch him. He is of better birth and breeding in every way than themselves.' And Mrs. Tudor scrutinized her niece's appearance carefully, and made up her mind, if Paul had only more money, that it would not be a bad thing for Esther to supplant Jane Dashwood if she could.

Esther had never looked better than on this evening, as she stood

beside the window waiting for their guest to arrive. She had, with considerable inward upbraiding, put on her white muslin dress, and braided her hair back from her face in that way poor Oliver liked. She was altogether looking unusually flushed, and well, and handsome; and reading this opinion of herself upon Mrs. Tudor's face, her uneasy conscience began supplying fine casuistic reasons to itself for having dressed so much and for having gained such a colour. 'I had nothing clean but my gingham, which looks so heavy by candlelight, and this white muslin. It is only the frock I danced in at school, Aunt Thalia; I hope Miss Whitty won't think I am too much dressed out. Indeed, I have made myself quite hot and miserable thinking whether I don't look too grand, as it is.'

'White muslin without an ornament is always in good taste,' said Mrs. Tudor, mildly. 'You dress your hair very well, Esther. Your face will bear that severe style till you are twenty-one, and white becomes you.'

'Oh, Aunt Thalia! I think it makes me look very dark. Do see how brown my hands are!'

She held out one of her arms, which the loose-falling sleeve displayed nearly to the shoulder, for Mrs. Tudor to analyze. It was a beautiful arm; slight, as yet, for the girl had not herself reached to the fulness of womanhood; but with delicate curved lines, full of promise for the future, and with a hand, tanned, certainly, by the sun and wind, but lithe and delicately moulded as a painter's heart could desire. 'I had a great mind to put on gloves, Aunt Thalia, only they would have made me look (more dressed still.'

'And as Mr. Chichester is only your friend's lover, your brown hands don't signify,' said Mrs. Tudor, drily. 'He will just deliver the Miss Dashwoods' messages and go away in half an hour, I have no doubt.'

A suggestion which made Esther retire to the window and gaze out in silence at the sea until a feeble apologetic knock at the front door heralded Miss Whitty's arrival.

'Just run out and take her into my bed-room, Esther,' said Mrs. Tudor, quickly. 'Wilson is much too fine a lady to wait upon Miss Whitty, and I don't like her going alone to my dressing-table. I wouldn't for worlds think anything really bad of the poor creature, but I *have* doubts about the pins. Pretend you wish to show her the way, and don't leave her alone for a minute. Do you hear?'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia, I hear.' And very hot and ashamed of her office, Esther went out to watch over the rectitude of poor Miss Whitty, whom she found disrobing herself, in quite a cheerful and good-tempered state of mind, upon the top of the stairs.

'It's a little weakness of your aunt's, dear Miss Fleming,' she whispered, 'a little weakness of dearest Mrs. Tudor's, not liking any one to be alone in her dressing-room, and so I am taking my things off here. Perhaps we shall all feel the same some day. Elderly people require artifices, you know, don't they?'

From which observation Esther gathered that it was latent, even in Miss Whitty's shallow little soul, to be occasionally spiteful if she dared. 'Mrs. Tudor sent me out to show you which was her room, Miss Whitty. Surely you would like to arrange your—your—her hesitation was caused by the very doubtful nature of the Whitty coiffure—"yourcurls at the glass."

'Well, I *will* just take a peep, then,' said Miss Whitty, girlishly, 'if you're sure it's no trouble. Pray don't think of getting a candle. One look is all I want.'

But the look, even in the fading twilight, seemed to disclose many and unexpected deficiencies to Miss Whitty's mind. 'Perhaps it would be as well regularly to settle oneself,

after all,' she remarked, putting her head on one side and looking plaintively at Esther. 'I did up a little parcel ready, you see, but not knowing where I was to undress, I didn't untie it at first. You wouldn't mind waiting a few moments here for me, would you?'

'Oh, not at all,' said Esther, who was every moment nervously expecting to hear Paul's knock at the door. 'There will be no one but ourselves and Mr. Chichester, though, and—I am sure you look very nice already, Miss Whitty.'

'But I am showing my frizzes! Yes, indeed I am. Why, I can feel them quite bare on each side of my head. Nothing looks so bad, so indecent indeed, as to show one's frizzes before gentlemen.' And then Miss Whitty unfolded her brown-paper parcel, and drew forth her shoes, and her brushes and comb, and her knitting, and a bow for her neck, and her bracelets, and various other small articles of promiscuous adornment. 'How do I look, dear Miss Fleming?' she inquired, after at least ten minutes' preparation. 'Would you kindly look, and tell me if my hair is right behind? Really there is nothing makes me so fearfully nervous as the thought of showing my frizzes.'

Now, but for Miss Whitty herself vouchsafing the information, no human eye would have detected the existence of 'frizzes' at all, the whole head having an extraordinarily flat, denuded aspect, save where irregular forests of little black satin bows, with strange pendant ladders of chenille rings, and other odds and ends of millinery, covered it away from sight at the back. Having heard as a girl that she had a good profile, Miss Whitty, at forty-nine, continued to show a great deal of cheek-bone and neck; the latter wound round with different devices of velvets and hair-chains, as foils to the complexion. She was dressed in a *bârge* gown of large pattern; but faded colours, suggestive of having been bought in a remnant at the end of a very remote Bath season; which dress, being of home make, hung rather irregularly about the skirts, and displayed, whenever its

wearer chanced to move inadvertently, strange glimpses of precarious slate-coloured hooping about the ankles. Shoes, known in the trade and to Miss Whitty as 'pru-nella,' with sandals that habitually came untied; rusty-black mittens, rather gritty to the touch; frequent garnet rings, and a brooch containing the photographic portrait of a general officer in field uniform, were the finishing points of Whitty's toilette, together with such minor accessories as a bag worked in beads for her knitting; a China crape scarf, in case of sudden modesty, upon her arm; and a very raggy-looking laced pocket-handkerchief, smelling hard of bad lavender-water, in her hand.

'I thought you had gone home again,' said Mrs. Tudor, pleasantly, when they entered the room. 'What, in the name of everything ridiculous, have you been doing to yourself all this time, Miss Whitty?'

'Only just changing my shoes and doing my hair, Mim,' answered Whitty, feeling herself turn hot and cold as Mrs. Tudor's great black eyes travelled with malignant composure over every poor item of her dress. 'Miss Fleming was so kind as to ask me into your room, Mim, and I thought, as a gentleman was coming, it would be as well to settle myself.'

'Ah! I see. As Mr. Chichester is an engaged man, however, you young ladies need not be so very particular in dressing for him, need you, Esther? Draw my chair to the table, my love, and get the cards out: we will begin our game at once. I am ordered to be in my bed at ten, Miss Whitty, and we have lost half an hour of our time already.'

When Mrs. Tudor was once well launched into cards, even though she played for nothing, she required no further attention from any of her company; and finding this, Esther stole out through the partially-closed Venetians and gave herself up, deliberately, to the pleasure of gazing at the sea and dreaming upon the balcony.

It was a sultry autumn night, not moonlit, though a white new moon was showing faint above the line of

downs beyond the bay, bat light with countless stars, and with the dusky red of sunset yet haunting the pale sky. Esther Fleming was still at an age when merely to breathe the air of a hot summer night can stir the blood with a thousand vague sensations of delicious unrest. She forgot Mrs. Tudor and the sounds of capote and re-pique which occasionally reached her from within; she forgot that she ought to be miserable away from Oliver and looking at the moon; she forgot — did she quite forget Paul Chichester? and was she thinking only of the old Vandyck upon the wall at Countisbury, when Paul's own voice, close at her side, startled her suddenly from her dreams?

'I am disturbing you, Miss Fleming, but I had Mrs. Tudor's permission to do so. I hope you were not thinking of anything very important.'

'Important! oh, not at all. I—I expected you!' And in her desire to be quite unembarrassed, Esther gave her hand to him. 'My thoughts are never of any importance, Mr. Chichester,' she added quickly. 'I was only enjoying this delicious warm air from the sea for a few minutes.'

'Then I am sorry I interrupted you. Nothing can be of greater importance to oneself than to be conscious of enjoyment.'

'I don't agree with that creed at all,' cried Esther. 'I think enjoyment is just the least important thing we have any of us to do with.'

'You believe you think so,' remarked Paul, laconically.

'I know that I feel so, Mr. Chichester.' And then, finding that the fading light, or some other circumstance, had hindered Mr. Chichester, up to this point, from perceiving that her hand was still in his, she withdrew it rather abruptly. 'I have a horror of even looking at one's life as a thing only to be enjoyed. I like to feel how good a thing it is "to suffer and be strong."

'Oh! what does that mean? It sounds like verse.'

— 'Sounds like verse! Don't you know that it is from one of Longfellow's most lovely little pieces?'

'I don't think I appreciate lovely little pieces. I certainly never read verses.'

'You never read poetry?'

'Not much; I am too old. When I was your age I used to read a good deal of it.'

'In those days, perhaps, you would have been able to see the beauty in those lines of Longfellow's.'

'Will you repeat them again?'

'Know how sublime a thing it is  
To suffer and be strong.'

'No, I should never see any beauty in them, because I should never think the sentiment of them strictly true. To do what lies before one is desirable, of course, but it is a great deal better if the duty happens to be pleasant. Suffering, as suffering, is no more sublime than self-denial, as self-denial, is virtuous.' However,—he interrupted himself—'it sounds pretty in rhyme, and repeated, as you repeated it, Miss Fleming.'

'In other words, I am not capable of arguing, but can be put off with a compliment, Mr. Chichester.'

Mr. Chichester laughed. 'You said that so like Jane Dashwood!' he remarked. 'I can easily see that you have both been to the same school.'

'Which, unfortunately, is not the case,' cried Esther, promptly, and with an irrepressible impulse of pique that Paul should have been first to mention Jane's name. 'It was Milly that was my schoolfellow; but I should be very glad to be like Jane in many things,' she added, after a minute or two.

'Poor Jane! she really has some excellent points!' said Paul, deliberately. 'Her faults show more on the surface, and her good qualities, such as they are, lie deeper than Miss Milly's. If Jane fell into good hands, I believe she might turn out well, even yet.'

'Mr. Chichester!'

'Miss Fleming!'

'You are talking of Jane Dashwood?'

'Certainly.'

'And she is engaged to you?'

Paul laughed again; a low, rather short laugh he had. Esther believed at first she did not like it. 'I

had no idea Miss Dashwood had been disclosing all her secrets. Really it would have been only right of her to tell me.'

'And so have prevented you from giving your opinion too freely?'

'Oh, not at all. I was not thinking of that. Because two persons happen to be engaged is no reason that they should not see and speak of each other's faults.'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester! love sees no faults at all.'

'Miss Fleming, you are awfully sentimental. This comes of reading poetry and gazing at the moon from balconies. Has not an engaged man, or, to go a great deal further, has not a man in love a brain and sight and hearing just like other men.'

'Yes, but love aways them all!'

'That depends chiefly upon the man's own strength of character. Now, imagine yourself—'

'Oh, no, thank you,' she interrupted him quickly; 'I don't want to speak about myself at all.'

'You don't know what I was going to say. Imagine yourself so unfortunately placed as to be engaged, then separated from the person to whom you are engaged. When you were together, perhaps, you had not much time for analyzation of character, but you have plenty, too much, indeed, apart. You see some one else, who teaches you what the first one should have been, and—'

'I should never change where I had once given my word,' Esther cried, warmly. 'Never!'

'That is another question. We are not talking of changing, but of being able, although in love, to see faults of character truly.'

'I would blind my eyes to them deliberately, Mr. Chichester. I would not acknowledge them even to myself.'

'But you would be conscious of their existence, notwithstanding.'

'I would never talk of them to any one else, at all events. I would never speak as—as—'

'As I did of Jane Dashwood just now. No, I suppose no one would do so who looked upon an engagement as a real one. You know, of course, that Miss Dashwood and

myself look upon ours as nothing of the kind.'

'Mr. Chichester!'

'It is part of our compact that we both may speak of it as it really is at any time we think proper. I have a fancy for doing so at this present moment. Miss Dashwood finds a nominal engagement to myself a matter of some convenience in the present state of her own affairs.'

'And you?' exclaimed Esther, as Paul hesitated slightly.

'Oh, I don't find my position a disagreeable one, exactly. It allows me to enter into a great many feelings, experimentally, which otherwise would never have come within the range of my own observation, and that has made up, in some measure, for having to go through a good many vastly stupid balls and parties in my attendance upon Miss Dashwood.'

'And when it is over—when you have both acted your parts through—how will you and Jane ever be able to look back upon it all, or upon each other's conduct?'

'I shouldn't suppose Jane would ever think of anything connected with me again. I shall always think of her with pleasure and gratitude. She is lovable in many ways, although I am not happy enough to be the man who has gained her love.'

'Oh!'

'Your tone is depreciating, Miss Fleming. Is there anything I have said that shocks your sense of right?'

'I can't enter into the subject, Mr. Chichester. I don't understand the world. I have very old-fashioned ideas.'

'Let me hear them, please.'

'It would be quite useless. We should never think alike. I hold an engagement to be a very solemn thing indeed, and I think it nearly as bad to act one as it would be to play at religion.'

'But if one acquires a knowledge of an entirely new class of sensation, from which, except as a spectator, one is, perforce, shut out! Is that no gain to oneself, do you think?'

'I cannot say. I am sure you ought not to do wrong merely to add to your experiences.'

'Miss Fleming, do you ever read novels?'

'Yes, when my cousin Joan lets me.'

'And you like them?'

'Yes, I like some of them extremely.'

'Have you ever been to the theatre?'

'I have been to the Opera twice and once to the Princess's. My cousin David gave me the money for the tickets when I went to school.'

'And don't you see that novels and plays yield just the same kind of knowledge that can be gained, at first hand, by oneself acting, for a while, as the hero of the piece?'

'Novels and plays are not real, Mr. Chichester.'

'Miss Dashwood's engagement to myself is not real, Miss Fleming.'

'Novels and plays deceive no one.'

'Nor do I.'

'But Jane deceives her father.'

Paul was silent.

'Jane deceives her father and she deceives herself, too, in thinking that she will not one day repent of all this folly. Although I have only seen her once, I know that Jane is much too good for the people she lives among. I am sure of that.'

'Do you include me in that sweeping anathema?'

'I don't know enough of you to say, Mr. Chichester. I was thinking of such companionship as that lady we saw to-day—that person you thought so handsome, you remember.'

'I don't know whom you mean. I have seen no handsome person to-day who could be considered an evil companion for Miss Dashwood.'

'Oh, that is a matter of opinion.'

'I think that a fresh, honest, although somewhat sentimental nature, is just one that it would do Jane immense good to come in contact with.'

'And is Mrs. Strangways frank, and honest, and rather sentimental, then?'

'I am not speaking of Mrs. Strangways, Miss Fleming.'

'Oh!'

And then Esther found she had nothing more to say, and she list-

ened with great attention to Mrs. Tudor's scoring quatorze to a king, and began playing with her fingers upon the rail of the balcony; and, finally, suggested, rather faintly, that the air was growing cold, and she thought perhaps it would be better to go in.

'Not at all,' answered Paul in his decisive way. 'What should you go in for?'

'Because it is getting cold.'

'I will bring you a shawl, then. And without being heard by either Mrs. Tudor or Whitty, he made his way softly into the room and brought out a light shawl of Mrs. Tudor's from the sofa. 'Will you let me put it on for you? Thank you, you need not stoop. I am tall enough to reach your shoulders when I hold myself very upright.'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester, how can you talk such nonsense? You are taller than me by three or four inches.'

'No, Miss Fleming, I am not. I am as inferior to you, physically, as I am mentally and morally.'

The words, although Paul's tone was jesting, hurt Esther with quite a sharp pain. What woman is not pained by an allusion to her intellect from the man she is prepared to love? 'You mean that I set myself very high, Mr. Chichester,' she cried; 'but you are just as wrong in that as you are about my size. Stand close to me, please, and you will see what a mistake you have made.'

He stood by her side, but not close. Something in her eager childish face would have withheld even a different man than Paul from misinterpreting her meaning.

'Now which is the taller, Miss Fleming?' he asked, when Esther had gravely held her head as high and majestically as possible.

'You, by a great many inches,' she answered, glancing up at the graceful outline of Paul's figure, as it cut, sharp and clear, against the evening sky. 'I am sure, although I did not think so at first, that you are nearly as tall as—'

'As—?'

'A friend of ours, Mr. Chichester. Some one I was thinking of—'

'Your cousin David, in short.'

'No, not exactly.'

'I understand. The person you were thinking of when I first interrupted you just now.'

'Oh dear no. I was thinking then of—of my old home in Devonshire. Don't you think the sky is looking clearer, Mr. Chichester?'

She knew, even in that dim light, that Paul's eyes were upon her face, and that he had seen her blush, 'Don't you feel a colder air coming up from the sea?'

'I feel sensible of a great chill, Miss Fleming. It has come on me suddenly—in the last few seconds.'

'And we had better go in, then?'

'As you will. Yes; probably it is better, for me, at all events, to go.'

Elsewhere I have disclaimed for Esther every quality belonging to a coquette. She had, however, enough instinctive vanity to catch at the meaning of Paul's tone. 'I think you must be very sensitive, Mr. Chichester,' looking up at him with her shy half-smile. 'You must be in a very delicate state of health if you are so dreadfully afraid of getting a chill.'

'Afraid? No, that is not the word. The effect cannot by any possibility be serious to me, but the immediate effect is unpleasant. You understand?'

Esther leant forward across the railing of the balcony, and made some remark again upon the beauty of the night. Those broad circles of gleaming light on the calm sea betokened fine weather. She had no doubt Mr. Chichester would have a pleasant day for his journey tomorrow.

'And I shall carry with me a pleasant remembrance,' said Paul, coming a step closer to her. 'Yes, in spite of that sudden chill I got just now, Miss Fleming, I shall remember this hour that you have allowed me to talk to you with gratitude. It is mine, you know! Although, I dare say, you will never think of me again, you have thought of me now, and I shall remember this one hour out of your life as belonging to me exclusively. Are you offended?'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester!' and she turned to him with that serious

smile that at times made her face absolutely beautiful; 'why should I be offended? I am glad you have cared to talk to me. I wished so much to meet you and know you —for Jane's sake.'

'And for Jane's sake you will not forget me?'

'No.'

I cannot take upon myself to say what answer or what equivocation that 'no' of Esther's was intended to convey; but Paul seemed satisfied with it; and it took him very nearly another hour to exhaust the subject of Miss Dashwood's messages, and to impress upon Esther's mind the extreme improbability, even if they should meet, of her ever giving him her full and undivided attention again. 'I believe I must go away now,' he remarked, at last. 'I hear sounds of Mrs. Tudor's being about to win her last game, and it will be wise of me to escape before Miss Whitty requires an escort home. Don't come in, thank you. I will say good-bye to you here.'

'Good-bye, Mr. Chichester.'

'Does myrtle grow on these sea-side balconies, Miss Fleming? A subtle sense of its presence has seemed close to me all this evening. Really, if I could see where it grows I would ask you to give me a piece. One doesn't get myrtle in London at this season of the year.'

'There is no myrtle here but this little piece I have in my belt. It is fading already. I brought it yesterday with some other flowers all the way from Devonshire. It is not worth your having.' And she gave it to him.

'Thank you, Miss Fleming. You are very kind; and I do not misinterpret your kindness. Thank you. Good-night.'

He held her hand closely for a second, then left her, and in another minute had got through his compliments to the ladies in the drawing-room, and left the house.

'The Miss Dashwoods seem to have sent long messages,' remarked Mrs. Tudor, when Esther at last made her appearance. 'If the young man could really remember stories that took him over an hour

and a half to deliver he must be a more devoted lover than I thought him.'

'And I think I must get you to show me that way of turning back the hair, Miss Fleming,' whispered Miss Whitty, as she was preparing to depart. 'It gives a soft, pensive look to the face that is really most interesting.'

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SCHUTLER.

When Esther found herself alone for the night her first action was to unlock the little box in which she kept those priceless treasures Mr. Oliver Carew's letters, and spread them out, lovingly, before her sight.

She felt (in her profound ignorance of human nature, her own especially) as though the very touch of these letters would do her good: as though she had but to read them over to feel how marvellously superior their writer was to Paul Chichester and every other man living. And yet she knew, instinctively, that she dared not, in her present state of mind, open the last. One or two terribly ill-constructed, not to say ungrammatical sentences, rankled too freshly in her memory yet for that: the earlier letters, all full of warmth and truth and tender recollections of their walks at Countisbury, those were what she needed to calm, to refresh her in this strange fever in which she found her thoughts! And so, after going duly through the initiatory rites always performed upon the opening of that sacred repository, the letters were brought forth slowly, one by one, and read.

She wished she had left them alone: she wished, at least, she had not read them till to-morrow. Never before had they seemed so trite and schoolboy-like as at that particular moment, when she would have given all for them to prove clever, or, at least, decently well-expressed. She could have written better letters when she was eleven; Joan, David, anybody could write better letters. Why, some of the sentences began in one tense and

ended in another; and some, if you investigated them strictly, had no very immediate meaning at all; and some, which should have been long and overflowing with feeling, were bald and curt; and others (full of such interesting details as the excellent dinners on board, or the price he had settled to give for a grey mare) were involved and lengthy; and all were in the style of the 'Polite Letter-Writer,' and all—very bitterly she reiterated this—were worse in thought and style, too, than she herself could have written when she was eleven years old.

And what if they were? Is it not proverbial that English lads, fresh from public schools, can scarcely spell their own names? that all young men are bad correspondents? that Oliver had, himself, asked her indulgence for his letters? And was she in love with Oliver Carew, or with his letters? Were his generous, manly qualities to be outweighed by defective syntax and doubtful orthography? He had never assumed intellect: she had chosen, of her own free will, to fall in love with him simply as he was. This very night she had told Paul Chichester that she would deliberately shut her eyes to all faults in the person she loved; and here she was carping over the one very small demerit that it was possible for her to find in her poor absent Oliver. Paul Chichester: she wished she had never seen him. In some way or other he was the cause of her taking out those letters, and seeing mistakes in them, and being bitter over them. Did she think him so immeasurably superior, then, in intellect to the man who was to be her companion for life?

Quite in a flush of indignant denial at the suggestion Miss Fleming sprang up, and, after tenderly storing away the letters, but wisely abstaining from reading another word of them, locked up her little desk and put it away out of her sight. Paul Chichester superior to Oliver! the idea was monstrous. To reflect upon its enormity at her ease she hid her candle in the further corner of her room, then seated herself on

the floor by the window, bent down her face upon her knees, and began to look out at the night.

The moon, that was showing faintly across the downs when Paul first spoke to her, had now travelled far away southward, and was shining, high and alone, on the pure purple of the midnight sky. Involuntarily Esther felt that she too had travelled far in the short space of the last few hours—that she had quitted for ever the land of dawning dreams—had stood and looked, for the first time, upon the wide sea of actual life and actual passion. Her engagement to Oliver had never made her feel thus. . . . What had made her feel it now?

Paul Chichester?

She wished again she had never seen Paul Chichester. That chance accident of likeness to the picture at Countisbury gave her a kind of foolish interest in his face which she was far from extending to Mr. Chichester himself. What was there, if one came to reason calmly, that was superior about him? His appearance? why, most people, no doubt, would think Oliver, with his fine broad shoulders and ruddy face, a vast deal better looking. And what mattered looks, too? Was a man better for having an intellectual forehead and refined cast of features? Could not a good, round, Saxon head and face express just as many excellent moral, if not, perhaps, intellectual, qualities, as any sombre, Vandyck countenance in the world? She was not sure, now, that she thought Paul Chichester at all good-looking. And his manner? abrupt and fitful; reserved one moment, and then suddenly advancing to the most intimate confidences the next! Had he behaved rightly in speaking as he had done of Jane? Had he not confessed to acting out a systematic course of deception simply for the sake of the pleasant sensations which his moral experience might occasion to himself? And was not [another still, small voice, *log.*] was not all that he had said about Jane and about his engagement half a jest? Had she, Esther Fleming, caught, in fact, one glimpse of Paul's true

character? Did not his face and voice tell of qualities widely different to any that their brief conversation had called forth? Had he not talked down to her—as men do to foolish girls of eighteen? Oliver had not talked down to her, because—because—he was so young himself, not yet one-and-twenty, and Paul Chichester was quite old—thirty, she should think, a dozen years older than herself.

Still, she would certainly like to know something more of him than what he was when he was talking nonsense and asking for bits of myrtle;—that myrtle rankled in Esther's conscience, so she tried to make quite light of it in her meditations. It would, she was convinced, be pleasant to be intimate, for once, with some one altogether stronger and cleverer than herself. Joan, perhaps, was cleverer; but then Joan was not agreeable; David was book-clever, but a child in knowledge of life and of human beings; and as to Oliver—well, of course he was intensely agreeable, and had seen a great deal more of the world than she had; but Oliver only saw on the surface, and had a habit of opening his blue eyes wide in rather a discouraging way if she tried to engage him in any little speculations on those subjects of right and wrong, and of the necessity of right and wrong existing, which to her own mind had been quite familiar problems since the time she was twelve years old. Oliver, in short, continually got out of his depth. She would prefer getting out of her own depth, and being upheld and set right again by a stronger mind than her own.

Then she preferred Paul as a companion to Oliver. The desolating conclusions at which she seemed fated to arrive on this evening overcame Esther with quite a sharp pain. Although strong enough to analyze her own new emotions, she was weak enough to feel shocked at the result of her own self-questioning!

'Oliver, you are first with me—Oliver, I will never, even to myself, allow that any other person can be superior to you!'

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She made this exposition of faith aloud, for greater solemnity, as she took one more look at the sea after putting out her candle; and then she went to her rest, poor child! and dreamt, not of Oliver Carew, but of the little old Vandyck upon the wall at Countisbury.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE TRIALS OF TOAD-EATING.

A month at the seaside was the utmost limit which Mrs. Tudor's regard for health, or even for fashion, could enable her to live through. She missed her whist, she missed her enemies, she missed her doctor, she missed her friends: she almost missed her accustomed pew in church. And then Wilson was so dissatisfied. Wilson averred that her bed had lumps like bullets in it: Wilson never found the seaside agree for long together with her head: the lodging people did not prepare buttered toast to Wilson's taste. How was it possible to remain more than a month in a place where Wilson could not get properly-arranged buttered toast for her tea?

'I really don't know what we should have done without you, Miss Whitty,' said Esther, kindly, as, on the morning of their departure, Whitty was fastening on labels and tying up parcels for Mrs. Tudor. 'Aunt Thalia would scarcely have lived through each day as it came round if it had not been for the prospect of your game at piquet in the evening.'

'Oh dear, no! Miss Fleming,' answered poor Miss Whitty, humbly. 'It is very good of you to say so; but I am sure playing with me for nothing must have been dull work after all your aunt is accustomed to at home. If I have afforded my little quota of amusement, it is, of course, very gratifying to reflect on—very gratifying indeed. I can never do enough in return for all dear Mrs. Tudor's great benefits to me.'

Esther had never yet been able to find out what were, in real, solid fact, the benefits accorded to Miss

Whitty by Mrs. Tudor. She knew that Whitty occupied the parlours beneath Mrs. Tudor's drawing-rooms in Bath, and that she was always ready to play double-dummy or piquet when required, or to prepare the rooms for a party, or to make tea in the back drawing-room, or to put away the plate again in silver-paper, or clean the vases, or wind up the time-piece, or perform any other office for which Mistress Wilson was either too high or too low. But none of these things appeared sufficient, to Esther's untutored mind, to constitute a debt of gratitude on the part of Miss Whitty. She could never hear of any benefits more substantial than a rare tea, or rarer dinner, or occasional present of mouldy jelly, disclaimed, no doubt, by Wilson, after a party; and, ignorant of the thorough spaniel qualities inherent in persons of the Whitty tribe, she began to think her a very amiable woman indeed for putting up with all Mrs. Tudor's tempers, and persisting still in regarding her as her own especial benefactress.

On this occasion of their journey home to Bath, Miss Whitty was to accompany them, Mrs. Tudor, from motives hereafter to be unfolded to Esther, generously paying the difference between first and second class, to enable her to travel in the same carriage with herself. And so, from very early in the morning, Miss Whitty had been packing and unpacking, and cording and uncording, with a ready subservience to all Mrs. Tudor's caprices that called forth many withering smiles on the face of Wilson.

'Loto's not to come with me, ma'am,' that potentate announced with true autocratic abruptness, at a very early period of the day. 'I've had her once, and I'm not going to have her again, not on any account, Mrs. Tudor.'

'Oh, but Wilson,' expostulated Mrs. Tudor, aghast.

'I'm not going to have Loto again, ma'am,' Wilson repeated, with an inexorable sniff of resolve. 'I know my own place, and I travel in my black silk. I had quite enough of such disgusting undelicate works

when we came, and I wouldn't have them over again if I was paid for it.'

And she glanced at Miss Whitty, who, hot and patient, was sewing up the parrot's cage for the third time, as though to indicate a fitting person—though not paid for it—to fulfil the office that was so much beneath herself.

And then it was, when Wilson had left the room, that Mrs. Tudor made the generous offer to Miss Whitty of accompanying them first class. 'It wouldn't be agreeable for you, my dear, to be getting in the same set of carriages with Wilson, and my niece and myself will be very glad of your company.'

Esther thought the offer exceedingly kind for Mrs. Tudor, as it really involved an expenditure of several shillings in hard money. But poor Whitty looked rather red and hesitating as she tendered her gratitude; and then, in a very weak suggestive voice, remarked, that of course Loto would go with the other dogs.

'Loto will not go with the other dogs, Miss Whitty,' said Mrs. Tudor in a fierce manner, contrasting forcibly with the humble one she had used towards Wilson. 'Loto is not going with the other dogs, to get bitten and worried, or catch the temper. Esther, my dear, you will have no objection to my little favourite being in the same carriage with us?'

'Oh dear, Mrs. Tudor! Oh my dear Mim!' exclaimed Whitty, in a moment, 'I shall be very glad to take charge of Loto, very glad indeed. I'm sure it's the least I can do, after your kindness in paying for me. I only—only meant, you know, that perhaps the railway people might not allow her in the carriage.'

'Loto must be wrapped up, Miss Whitty,' remarked Mrs. Tudor, with slightly relaxing severity. 'I am perfectly aware of that. Loto must be wrapped up.'

'In my shawl!' cried Whitty, with exultation. 'In my shawl. Dear little creature! so she must, of course. I wonder I didn't think of it before.' And, under the prospect of this new favour, she seemed more perseveringly amiable, and desirous

of being made use of, or in any way trodden under foot, than usual, during the rest of the morning.

'Mrs. Strangways leaves Weymouth to-day,' she informed Esther shortly before they left. 'I heard it from my lodging-girl, who knows the chambermaid's sister at the York. She goes by the two-twenty train as we do. Wouldn't it be a remarkable coincidence' (Whitty thought everything was a remarkable coincidence) 'if we were to travel in the same carriage? She's going back to Bath to join her husband. He's a queen's messenger, you know, and returned from St. Petersburg last night. The telegraph—the telegram, I mean to say—arrived quite late in the evening, and she sat up packing half the night. Most devoted, wasn't it?'

'Devoted to return to her husband? Well, Miss Whitty, I really can't see it quite in that light. Besides, as she is not leaving till this afternoon, she might have deferred it till the morning, and so have spared herself the trouble of being devoted at all.'

Esther had been conscious, before ever seeing her, of an instinctive dislike to Mrs. Strangways; and that bow and smile she had once seen her accord to Paul Chichester, strangely enough, had not dispossessed her of the prejudice; so she was by no means warm in her manner when Mrs. Strangways came up, an hour later, as they were waiting upon the platform for the train, and proffered a very friendly renewal of acquaintance with Mrs. Tudor. Mrs. Strangways had seen Mrs. Tudor [several times on the beach, but had not known whether Mrs. Tudor had recognized her or not. Sometimes people did not care for the trouble of making or renewing acquaintance by the seaside. She had met Mrs. Tudor at old Mrs. Bradshaw's last winter, and at Mrs. Kennedy's too. The general was laid up with the gout again. Mrs. Tudor had heard it, no doubt? 'And this,' turning composedly, and staring straight in Esther's face, 'this is Miss Fleming, I am sure. I have often heard of Miss Fleming from my friend Jane Dashwood.'

The words and manner were, of course, irreproachable; yet Esther felt that Mrs. Strangways implied, 'This great, raw, country-looking girl *must* be Miss Fleming. There can't be two such persons in the world as the Miss Fleming I have heard of.' And with that inborn dignity of hers, which was fully equal to all Mrs. Strangways' artificial assurance, she turned away as soon as Mrs. Tudor had introduced them, and began quietly asking Miss Whitty as to the disposal of the luggage.

'Oh, it's all right, I think. I'll just look at my card again. Six cases of Mrs. Tudor's and yours, and four of Wilson's, and my own box, and the parrot's cage, and umbrella, and air-cushion, and handbag, and basket. It's all quite right; but, oh dear, Miss Fleming, how much I wish it was safe for Loto to go with the other dogs! he's so very strange, and I think I must say disagreeable in his temper to-day.'

If poor Miss Whitty had an aversion in the world it was for dogs; if there had been anything she could have refused to a person with an income of more than six hundred a year, it would have been to carry a dog wrapped up in her shawl. And then Loto, even for a fat old lapdog, was so superlatively disgusting! Loto made asthmatic noises as she breathed; Loto had a disagreeable filmness over her eyes; Loto was vicious, and treacherous, and snapping, and odious in every sense. The sufferings of the celebrated young Spartan with his fox were scarcely greater than what Whitty endured as she pressed Loto to her heart in her endeavours to screen her from the porters at that Weymouth station.

'Keep her head covered, Miss Whitty, keep her head covered,' said Mrs. Tudor, when they had taken their places in the carriage. 'Don't mind her trying to bite, it's only a playful way she has. Keep her well covered up, and seat yourself back. The guard will be coming in directly to see the tickets.'

'And if I should be found out!' cried Miss Whitty, who, between her exertions with Loto and the

fears incident to her sex and age, that some one had taken her luggage, was in a state of most remarkable heat. 'If they find the dog out at the last, what am I to do?'

'Please don't raise such absurd difficulties, Miss Whitty,' said Mrs. Tudor, tartly. 'If you let the creature be seen, of course I shall have to pay for it. But, remember, if you do, make no application to me. Discussions with common people destroy me. For the time being Loto is yours; I wash my hands of her. Esther, my dear, come and sit with me at my end of the carriage. It is necessary for Miss Whitty to have a window to herself, in case poor Loto requires air.'

By dint of incessant feeding with sandwich and biscuits, to say nothing of occasional sharp nips round Loto's throat, Miss Whitty actually succeeded in evading all the official vigilance of Weymouth, and Esther was just hoping that they were to travel without Mrs. Strangways for a companion, when, at the last moment, a clear ringing laugh announced that lady to be still waiting upon the platform.

'Empty carriage here,' drawled a tall, silly-looking lad of eighteen, glancing superciliously for a moment, with very elevated eyebrows, across poor Miss Whitty's shrinking figure. 'Room here, Mrs. Strangways, if you don't mind being so near the engine.'

'Oh, I shall be quite safe, thank you. Minnie will take care of me, won't you, Minnie? Good-bye, Edward. Now mind, we are to see a great deal of you in town next spring. I shall never forgive you if you don't come and see me at once. Good-bye.' And then there was a very warm leave-taking, and, as it seemed to Esther, a rather conspicuous affectation of tenderness on 'Edward's' face, as he whispered parting compliments in the ear of this lady, who, in spite of her tiny hat, and turned-back hair, and manner of girlish heartiness, was still very nearly old enough to be his own mother.

'Edward' continued to stand by the carriage, carrying on an inaudible conversation with Mrs. Strang-

ways until the train started; and then, and not till then, could Mrs. Strangways' eyes disengage themselves sufficiently from the fastening of her glove to perceive that there were other occupants besides herself in the carriage. 'Mrs. Tudor how very glad I am! You are going to Bath, of course? We shall be fellow-travellers for the remainder of the day, then! And Miss Fleming. I had not perceived you before; these horrid walls in the centre divide the carriages so completely in two.'

'I think those walls are the great advantage of the Great Western and its branches,' said Esther. 'They enable one just to see as much as one chooses, and no more, of one's fellow-passengers.'

It was unlike Esther Fleming to make so rude a speech; but some invincible desire seemed to propel her towards being disagreeable to Mrs. Strangways. Her Aunt Thalia heard her with complacence. It was a decided impertinence for a woman like Mrs. Strangways to pretend she had not seen her, Mrs. Tudor, sooner; a woman in a doubtful set, with a questionable reputation, and an income dependent upon her husband's services as queen's messenger! Mrs. Tudor was glad to see that Esther, young as she was, knew how to set people down, on occasion, and also what kind of people it was right to set down.

'I think I know that little lad's face you were talking to, Mrs. Strangways; he's one of the Stantons, just the same silly white face as his mother. I suppose he and your young people are friends. Has your eldest son left school yet? I forgot.'

'My eldest son, dear Mrs. Tudor! my children are quite little. Minnie, darling, come and say how do you do to Mrs. Tudor.'

But Mrs. Strangways' eyes flashed. The ages of her three eldest children were bitter drops in her cup, thorns in her side, weapons of cruel sharpness, ever ready to the hand of all female friends who chanced to stand in need of any extraneous weapon of attack. Dates of all other kinds may be falsified; but what can put back the living, tangible at-

tation conveyed by children of eleven, twelve, and thirteen years of age? Children tall of their age, too. The only way, and that a precarious one, of suppressing such evidence is to keep any unpleasantly-old children as much as possible at school, and out of sight; and this Mrs. Strangways did, reserving for her own companion her youngest child, Minnie, who, by reason of being pretty, and like herself, and small of her years, and considerably younger than the others, absorbed very nearly all the maternal instincts which Mrs. Strangways' scantily-endowed nature could supply.

The results of alternate, unbounded indulgence and absolute neglect, want of exercise by day, and sitting up late at night, did not seem to be very happy ones on Miss Minnie Strangways, whose small face was sallow and pinched, and, even at five years old, already wore a good deal of the anxious, restless look of her mother's. 'I don't want to change my place, thank you, ma,' was her answer to her mother's request. 'I don't want to come by you. I like to stop here and look at this woman and her dog.' And then Minnie perched her small feet up on the opposite seat, and recommenced staring poor Miss Whitty out of countenance with an air of cool superiority and *aplomb* that was good to see.

'Your daughter appears used to have her own way,' said Mrs. Tudor, 'like most of the other young people of this generation.'

'Oh, poor little thing! she is shockingly spoiled; so much with me, you see, and no companion of her own age. I believe, really, I ought to get her a governess, but it would take her so much out of my hands, I can't make up my heart to it.'

'And you would find a governess a very heavy expense, Mrs. Strangways, as you travel so much. I believe I have heard that you frequently join Mr. Strangways when his services carry him abroad?'

'Oh, yes, Tom will have me go to meet him whenever I can. It is a great pity—it obliges me to part

from the other children. Minnie and I had to rush off to Austria last Christmas, and when we got to Vienna, Mr. Strangways had left for somewhere else, and I had to stay there in all the horrid, cold, German winter by myself.'

'So I heard,' remarked Mrs. Tudor curtly: the world, in general, had not been behindhand in making many kindly surmises as to that last Viennese expedition of Mrs. Strangways. 'Esther, my love, come and sit by me. Do you remark that little village to the left? That is where your Aunt Engleheart and I once lived in our young days.'

Mrs. Strangways leant her head back quickly in her corner, and the expression of her face told Esther that Mrs. Tudor's manner had taken effect. After expressing due interest in the two farm-roofs and half a church spire that could be seen through the trees, she began to reflect what kind of life this woman's opposite her must be: this woman, in the prime of life still, with children, sufficient means, all the things that go so long a way towards making up happiness; but whom, in spite of all her cool assurance, so many chance shafts from alien hands had power to wound, and upon whose handsome face unrest and discontent were already written in handwriting not to be mistaken.

Mrs. Strangways was very handsome; perhaps it would not be too much to say that she was beautiful. She had taken her hat off now, and was leaning her head back with her eyes closed, so Esther was able to scrutinize her closely. The delicate blue-veined temples, off which the blonde, luxuriant hair was braided back, the straight fine brows, the full rich lips, the graceful lines—though slightly shrunken now—of cheek and neck, all belonged to a higher class of beauty than anything Esther had seen before. Her own opinion might be that Mrs. Strangways' eyes, in spite of all their blue, were cold and hard of expression; that the mouth was sensual, the whole beauty too Cleopatra-like. The beauty itself was indisputable. No man would stop to ask himself what kind of mind or soul looked out from so per-

factly fair a face! No man would think herself, Esther Fleming, anything but a dark, heavy-looking girl, beside Mrs. Strangways, although one was eighteen and the other two or three and thirty at least. What did Paul really think of her? Esther wondered. He had evaded the subject; he had implicated opinions the reverse of favourable of her as a companion for Jane. But then, how sweetly Mrs. Strangways had smiled upon him! Whatever else his sentiments, any man receiving a sweet smile from such a mouth could have no other opinion than that Mrs. Strangways was one of the most beautiful, the most fascinating women in the world!

Just as she reached this point in her meditations, Mrs. Strangways opened her eyes. 'You know Paul Chichester, Miss Fleming, don't you?' she asked, abruptly.

'I know him slightly,' answered Esther, and she felt thankful that she possessed self-control enough not to colour before Mrs. Strangways. 'His engagement to Jane Dashwood has, of course, made me hear a good deal of him.'

Mrs. Strangways laughed, and her laugh had a very bitter ring in it. 'Paul Chichester's engagement to Jane Dashwood! How simply you said that, Miss Fleming! Has Jane really made you believe Mr. Chichester will marry her?'

'Miss Dashwood has said very little to me on the subject. I believe the engagement is considered an open one.'

'Open, but none the less sure of ending in smoke! Why, every one knows that poor Jane Dashwood is over head and ears in love with some one else. And as to Paul—as to Mr. Chichester, I mean—he never makes any concealment of his fixed intention of not marrying at all.'

Miss Whitty, from her corner, heard this and looked up, quite excited. 'Mr. Chichester never means to marry! What a remarkable, what a very remarkable thing, and such a young man, too! There must be something in the background, for certain; better not inquire, perhaps! Miss Fleming, who would ever have thought, that

moonlight night when he was giving you Miss Dashwood's messages on the balcony behind the curtains, you know, that he was not a marrying man? I don't know that I have been so surprised by hearing anything for a long time. If one was intimately acquainted with Colonel Dashwood, now, it would be positively one's duty to acquaint him of the circumstances.'

'Of what circumstances, Miss Whitty?' asked Esther, with a quiet smile.

'Why, of Mr. Chichester giving out he does not intend to marry, and yet continuing to court Miss Dashwood all the time. It is just the kind of thing to break a young girl's heart: really I have no patience with such men.'

'I don't think you need have any fears for Miss Dashwood. She is not a girl at all likely to break her heart, nor I should think was Mr. Chichester a man to act dishonourably.'

'You speak with warmth, Miss Fleming,' said Mrs. Strangways. 'Paul Chichester should be indebted to you for your kind defence of him.'

It was with great difficulty Esther could restrain herself from resenting the implied impertinence of the speech; but she did so: and probably her cool silence irritated her antagonist more than the bitterest retort she could have made. It was evident to Mrs. Strangways that the girl knew more of the whole matter than she either said or intended to say; evident that Paul was not a stranger to her, and that, while she professed to believe in his engagement, she was not one whit surprised to hear of his intention of not marrying. Was there more still than this? Could Paul, who professedly never admired any but fair, refined women, be taken by the rude hearty goodlooks, the mere country flesh-and-blood comeliness of a face like that?

Mrs. Strangways leaned her head back in the corner of the carriage, after curily desiring her daughter to come and sit beside her at once; Miss Fleming commenced a cheerful conversation with Whitty upon the probabilities of Lota's sleep lasting

until they reached Bath—and possessed, I suppose, by that sort of magnetic influence which communi-cates itself to any two women who are, or ever shall be, rivals—not another word, not another look was exchanged between them during all the remainder of the time that they continued in enforced companion-ship.

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### CHAPTER XVIII.

#### AN UNKNOWN RIVAL.

A friend was waiting on the platform at Bath to receive Mrs. Strangways when they arrived—a tall and handsome friend; older, and very different looking to the Edward of Weymouth; but who, apparently, stood quite as high as that young gentleman himself in Mrs. Strangways' regards.

'Is that her husband, Aunt Thalia?' Esther asked, as she and Mrs. Tudor were standing waiting for Whitty and the luggage. 'Is that very good-looking person who is talking to Mrs. Strangways her husband?'

'That very good-looking person is Arthur Peel,' answered Mrs. Tudor. 'Whatever man you see beside Mrs. Strangways, at any time, or in any place, you may feel very safely assured is not her own husband. That woman is outstepping all bounds. I shall desire you to be careful in recognizing her until I have made out, exactly, at what houses she is received at present.'

Esther had not time then to trouble herself further about either Arthur Peel or Mrs. Strangways, but the next morning, during an early visit that she received from the Dashwoods, she mentioned the twilight meeting which she had seen the night before on the platform. 'Is it necessary for Mrs. Strangways' safety that some one should always receive her and see her off when she travels, Miss Dashwood? or do you suppose that "Edward" and Mr. Peel were both what poor Miss Whitty would call "happy coincidences"?'

'Coincidences! not a bit,' said Jane; and her face turned rather

red. 'The little wretch you saw at Weymouth was one of her boys, no doubt, the fearful boys that she always manages to get round her in the country or at the sea-side—*faut de mieux!* (and as Mrs. Strangways grows older it is an undoubted fact that her worshippers grow younger); as to Arthur—'

'As to Arthur, Jenny?' asked Miss Millicent, somewhat maliciously.

'Well, I don't mind saying, deliberately, that Mrs. Strangways writes to him—I have seen her notes numbers of times—writes and asks him, in that sort of way she has, to meet her at such an hour on such a day. "It would be quite a kindness to Mr. Strangways, who has another engagement," *et cetera*. Then, of course, Arthur goes. How could he refuse to go, even if he wished?'

'And with what object does she ask him?' said Esther. 'What can be any woman's object in compromising her own self-respect for so very slight a reward as Mr. Arthur Peel's companionship?'

'I suppose when we are past thirty we shall know,' replied Jane, petulantly; 'that is to say, if we are still eager and athirst for attention, and willing to cast our reputation away with our own hands, sooner than not be spoken of at all, as she is. Wait till you have known her longer before you try to analyze Mrs. Strangways' motives, Miss Fleming. If you have a turn for moral dissection, like Paul, I can assure you her character is well worth attention. I used to study her, myself, until, one day, the thought struck me that most probably she was what I should be, myself, in another dozen years, and then I gave up the whole investigation in disgust. You have seen Paul, by the way? he told me all about you in a letter—oh yes, he *does* write to me—such queer love-letters—I must show you some of them! Do you like him? He was very guarded, and didn't say whether he talked to you for five minutes or five hours, or alone or before your aunt. Do you think him handsome? do you think I have chosen well?'

'Esther thinks him too good for

you, Jane,' said Milly, as Esther hesitated, visibly. ' You know you always predicted that they would like each other amazingly at first sight—elective affinity, and all that. Don't be jealous, now, if your own prophecies turn out to be true ones. Esther thinks him a great deal too good to be wasted on such a very remarkable description of engagement as yours.'

' I think I know scarcely anything of Mr. Chichester,' said Esther. ' I should say he was not a man to be judged of after a single day's acquaintance.'

' Nor after many days' acquaintance,' added Jane. ' I have watched him pretty closely through a good many of his moods, and I verily believe I know him less now than I did on the first day I ever saw him.'

' And yet you must have had singularly good opportunities of judging of his character,' remarked Miss Fleming, with emphasis.

' Yes, better than if our engagement had been a real one. I see you know all about it; and I must say it was base of Paul to be the first to tell you. When people are really engaged, they, of course, never speak or look at each other without acting—their state necessitates it. Now Paul with me has been as open as with an ordinary friend—more so, perhaps, from the very fact of our sham engagement shutting out the possibility of misconstruction on either side.'

' But surely Mr. Chichester must be the last man living to fear misconstruction, Miss Dashwood. As he openly proclaims the impossibility of his ever marrying, there cannot be danger for any one, however intimate with him.'

' Who told you that Mr. Chichester was never going to marry?'

' Mr. Chichester himself.'

' On my word, Miss Fleming, he seems to have made the most of his time at Weymouth, short though it was!'

' He said nothing at all decided upon the subject—I mean—for Esther here recollects Paul's vague hints to her on that moonlight night whose merest recollection still had

power to stir her heart so strangely. ' I mean, nothing that could be put into actual words. It was Mrs. Strangways who said so.'

' Mrs. Strangways! what an excellent, disinterested authority! Did she know, I wonder, that you were acquainted with Paul?'

' Oh, yes! She saw us speaking to him on the parade one morning and then, I believe, Miss Whitty told her about his talking to me on the balcony that evening—I mean—'

' Oh! pray don't explain. It is quite evident the flirtation has commenced in good earnest. I wish you joy of it, Miss Fleming, and I will promise you never to feel jealous; but still, as you have already reached the balcony stage, I think it my duty, as a friend, to state that Mrs. Strangways' information, though spiteful, is quite correct. Paul Chichester will never marry.'

' Oh!'

' He told me so once, perhaps with a man's true vanity, thinking I might be in danger if he did not; and there was something in his face when he said it that made me feel him to be sincere—painfully sincere. Milly entertains all sorts of wonderful theories of her own as to the real cause of his intentions in this matter.'

' And of his moodiness and oddness too,' interrupted Milly. ' I don't know what you mean by "theories," Jane. I judge by facts; and I am sure the extraordinary things we know about Paul are quite enough to make any one think as I do.'

' The extraordinary things being that, when I was in town, I happened twice to meet him in Covent Garden with a bouquet of white flowers in his hand, and that here, in Bath, papa frequently sees him buying white flowers in the market. Miss Fleming, what supposition do you imagine Milly grounds upon this foundation?'

' That Mr. Chichester is fond of flowers, I should think,' said Esther, with a little laugh: but, in spite of herself, her spirit sank somewhat as she spoke.

' Fond of flowers! what nonsense!'

cried Miss Millicent, indignantly. 'As if men were ever fond of flowers or ever bought them for themselves! Besides, what was the time when you met him in Covent Garden?—ten o'clock in the morning. Is it likely he would go out at such an hour to get flowers for himself? Would he, here in Bath, be seen out in the market before breakfast, and then walking away with his flowers across Combe Down in a pouring rain if they were for himself? The thing speaks for itself!'

'Then whom are they for, Milly? And, having had time to prepare herself, Esther believed that she now spoke very calmly and collectedly. 'Who is the happy recipient of Mr. Chichester's white bouquets?'

'Ah! there is the mystery. Jane suggested that he might be privately married, perhaps; but that supposition could not possibly hold good. Who ever heard of a man getting up early to buy flowers for his wife? and the most expensive ones, too! Papa took it for granted they were all coming to Jenny, and brought us home such a description of them—roses, and azaleas, and everything that was hardest to be bought. Do you remember, Jane, you borrowed my last five shillings, and went out and got some like them at once, for fear papa should begin making inquiries, and get to hear more than was convenient?'

'Yes; and those I saw him with in town were just of the same expensive kind,' Miss Dashwood replied. 'Moss rose-buds, and white heath, and rhododendron, early in May.'

'Then, whoever it may be that the flowers reach, she has good taste,' said Esther, rather shortly. 'And, as none of us have any real interest in Mr. Chichester, I don't see why we should trouble ourselves by speaking of things that can only concern him.'

'You are quite right, Miss Fleming!' cried Jane, starting up suddenly, in her impulsive fashion. 'Milly, we ought to be ashamed of ourselves for giving way to such undignified curiosity. I shall never

speak about those flowers of Paul's again.'

'But I shall,' cried Milly, who was not at all prone to sudden revulsions of delicacy. 'Nothing is greater fun to me than routing out a mystery; and I have long determined to come at the meaning of Paul's flowers, and his oddness, and his stealthy comings and goings, and everything about him. I have had a capital scheme in my head for some time past; and you, and Esther too, although you may be too high-minded to give me any assistance, will both be just as curious as me to hear the news, when I have got it.'

'What should you say if I made a right guess about it all, now, Milly, and so saved you your trouble? Mr. Chichester may have been getting flowers all this time for Mrs. Strangways. She is a person who, I should imagine, would not mind receiving those sorts of small attentions, and he mentioned having been acquainted with her in London as well as in Bath.'

Now I fully believe that Esther said this to turn aside the tacit reproof which she felt her former remark must have conveyed to Jane; at the same time, and giving her credit for any amount of honest simplicity, I cannot help thinking she had also some desire, some latent curiosity herself, to hear Mrs. Strangways' name mentioned by the Dashwoods in connection with Paul's.

'You dear, verdant old Esther!' cried Milly. 'So like you to fix upon the one wicked thing in the world that will never come to pass! Paul Chichester won't have Mrs. Strangways' goodwill at any price, will he, Jane?'

'I think it a great pity you try to talk slang, Milly dear; you do it so badly, and it doesn't become you.'

'Oh! that's very fine, Miss Dashwood. I have heard you say the same thing a dozen times, at least; but you always want us to seem better than we are before Esther.'

'What is it that you have heard me say, Milly?'

'That Paul won't have Mrs. Strangways at any price.'

'I am sure I never said it in those words, which, putting aside their vulgarity, don't mean anything whatever.'

'Then you have said it in others quite as expressive,' persisted Milly. 'I remember, perfectly, one night at the Strangways' (that night papa did not go, and you would sit out half the dances with Arthur Peel), just as we were leaving the cloak-room you congratulated Paul upon Mrs. Strangways' attention to him, and he said—'

'My dear Milly, it is time for us to go,' interrupted Jane; but she reddened somewhat guiltily. 'You have talked quite nonsense enough for one occasion, I am sure.'

But Milly was not to be silenced. 'And Paul shrugged his shoulders, and said, "No, Miss Dashwood, I must really disclaim the happiness you assign to me. Mrs. Strangways is not at all likely to take any trouble

about so insignificant a person as myself. 'Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle,'" I remember it so well because I asked you what that meant in English as we were driving home.'

'Then all I can say is that it's a great pity you have not better things to remember, Milly. Any man living might be excused for making a stupid remark at the fag end of one of Mrs. Strangways' stupid "At Homes," but it is really too bad that such speeches should be chronicled.'

And then Miss Dashwood so resolutely changed the subject by discoursing about the gaieties that they were to have during the ensuing winter, and her hopes that Miss Fleming would be induced to join in them, that Esther (whatever in her heart she might desire) had no further opportunity of hearing Paul Chichester's name that day.

### PARISIAN PROMENADES.

THERE is one radical difference between the rides, drives, and promenades of London and of Paris. Here, true British Brahmins that we are, we preserve our caste even out of doors—there, both the world and the people choose the same spots for air and recreation. Here, the upper classes keep aloof from the middle classes, and the middle classes from the humble. There, marquis, millionaire, merchant, shopkeeper, and ouvrier mingle as naturally, and sometimes as agreeably as the ingredients of a salad. Socially and personally, every Englishman is a human island, every Frenchman only a portion of continent—not that the Gaul's nature is more adhesive than the Briton's—but his climate makes him more gregarious, and he must either chatter constantly or die.

The term 'London Society' carries with it a distinct meaning. A man is either in society or out of it, or on its threshold or its staircase. He may be in it and not of

it; but there are not two opinions as to what the term means. Now in Paris, society is both more divided and more conglomerated—more exclusive and more open—more accessible and more hermetically sealed.

There is the ancienne, composed of the old historic names, feudal seigneurs who have not trilled syllable on political affairs since 1830. To the rest of France, their salons are closed and their concierges are respectfully forbidding: foreigners they will welcome with that grand old pre-revolutionary French politeness that neither the overthrow of the monarchy, the destruction of that charming safeguard of the honour of families the Bastille, decapitation, exile, senatorial self-annihilation, and Zouave uniforms, has ruffled one marabout feather. As Brummel 'cut' the Prince Regent, so have these highly-bred cavaliers and stately dames 'cut' France. She is unworthy of them—they will fight for, danqe for,

legislate for, and trample on her no more. About the time that breeches went out, and trousers came into fashion, France expired, and the Faubourg St. Germain plunged itself into perpetual mourning. But they are society, these grand old nobles, and whether the political part they play be pitiable or imposing, they are still the crème de la crème.

Following up the lacteal metaphor, the nobility of the Empire, even from the Legitimists' point of view, may surely be considered the very best fresh milk, capable, when it has 'stood' long enough, of producing the very richest cream. The statesmen, field-marshals, engineers, and authors, who, since the beginning of this century, have done so much towards ruling, conquering, improving, and delighting the whole world, are society, and very good society; but would the dwellers in the tall houses of the grim old aristocratic faubourg recognize them? Sooner shall the white lilies be grafted on the tricolor, or the lilies themselves change hue, blush red, and blossom blue.

There is another sort of society that goes to court and gives receptions. It is of inferior pasture, and was called by Balzac the new noblesse of the Chaussee d'Antin. It must be remembered that the great novelist spoke of the Chaussee d'Antin of forty years ago. The speculators and entrepreneurs who compose it no longer live in their old quartier; but wherever they pitch their tents, there is crimson and cloth of gold, there champagne sparkles, and foie gras is rich in the mouth. The young men of this metallic nobility are the viveurs of Paris, and are known at the Café de Paris, the Maison Dorée, and Madrid. Their dress is stentorian, their waist-coats and shirt-fronts being especially complicated, gorgeous, and arabesque.

Poets, authors, painters, and journalists are of society, for the world of Paris is so benighted as to think a writer or an artist of distinction fit company for a kaiser. They are much behind us in that respect, these unfortunate Parisians!

The promenade, as they call it, or the ride or the drive, as we should call it, most frequented 'du monde,' and least by les bourgeois et les ouvriers, is the Bois de Boulogne. Thackeray has sung in his famous song of Drummer Pierre:

' You all know the Place de la Concorde,  
'Tis hard by the Tuilleries wall;

And the Elysian Fields, on a bright clear day, present a sight seldom forgotten by the man who looks towards the Arc de Triomphe for the first time. And how charmingly laid out is this small celestial prairie! What facilities are afforded for that 'distraction' for which all Parisians of all degrees are seeking! There are the Cafés Chantants, and the little toy-houses, that are neither mosques, nor pavilions, nor conservatories, nor arbours, nor Chinese josses or junks, but have a painted, picked-out panel flavour of them all. Then there are all sorts of conveniences for small gambling, the favourite game being a compound of croquet, billiards, and the familiar schoolboy pegtop, and roundabouts such as the childhood of our cold climate never dreamt of, even under the influence of a Christmas indigestion—roundabouts where, for the small charge of two sous, a jeune monsieur or a jeune dame can ride anything, from a low-backed car to a fiery dragon. To the practised eye of a gamin, a hippogriff is a commonplace animal, and Pegasus a circulating medium of every-day occurrence.

But these sights are stationary, and it is the panoramic effect of the many moving equipages that gives most pleasure to the looker-on. There are plenty of carriages, but few horsemen; and that most graceful of female gear, the long flowing breezy riding-habit, is seldom seen. The gandin prefers driving to the saddle. En cavalier, he is subject to the rude remarks of urchins. It is a charming thing for those very young men, who are sensitive to street-pleasantries, to know that the dirty little boys of one great capital exactly resemble the dirty little boys of another. There is a family likeness in gaminerie, and the Pa-

risian variety of the species have a quick eye for a bright spot of costume, or any external peg whereon to hang a ludicrous conceit. On the race-course, at Longchamps, a highly-dressed young gentleman was caracoling on a prancing steed. A gamin caught sight of his well-fitting gloves, which were of a brilliant yellow. 'Pierre,' shouted he, 'this gentleman there has been and shoved his hands into a pair of omnibuses!' The reader will perhaps better appreciate the joke when reminded that in Paris the omnibuses are yellow.

Although the ride to the Bois is charming, the majority of Frenchmen are not happy on horseback—they seem on duty rather than on pleasure, when followed by un groom. Un groom is generally so emphatically un groom, and not a groom!

In the carriages, the men sit sternly upright, and the ladies lean back majestically. The pace is pleasant but slow, and is kept up during the drive. There is none of the dash and gallop of our equipages when they find an open space, nor of the crawl and dawdle when the 'Row' is packed. As has been remarked in a former paper, the vehicular 'turn out' of Paris has wonderfully improved since 1851, and 'les dog-carts' look quite knowing and turf-y.

The good folks on foot sit down very much during their walk. It is their way of enjoying pedestrian exercise; for your Parisian is so inveterate a flâneur one would think he would flâne during a bombardment. He seldom goes beyond the Arc afoot; and the carriages, as they roll through that charming piece of vainglorious sculpture, into the Avenue de l'Impératrice, have it all to themselves. A pleasant trundle over a well-watered road, and the beautiful gates of the beautiful Bois admit you to its leafy serried ranks of foliage—for a large portion of the park is laid out with military rectangularity. The lower branches of the trees are lopped off, and they stand in the earth stiffly, like soldiers at the word 'Attention!' There are broad roads for carriages,

and narrow alleys, or *columns*, of verdure, under which equestrians can canter.

The pedestrian who prefers trunks of trees to street-lamps, is permitted to wander from the paths to a thick, umbrageous solitude, where he may, if he please, indulge himself with reflections, like Jacques, but must not, like Orlando, carve any name on any tree. *C'est défendu!* as all mischief ought to be.

In one of these well-kept jungles we met an Orlando and Rosalind of 1863: Orlando in bottes vernies, and lemon-coloured kid gloves—Rosalind in a piquant and provoking little hat and feather, and the sauciest of abbé collars. She kept her eyes upon the moss as young Mr. O. into the porches of her pretty sea-shell-looking ear did pour his lover-like attachment. As they neared us their eyes met ours, but they did not start, or seem confused, or affect an indifferent manner, after the fashion of billers and coopers of Britannic parentage; but went by as if we had no existence, Orlando bending towards her, his eyes fixed upon her cheek; Rosalind with half-averted head, but listening body. They were not ashamed of being seen, or of each other; and so they threaded the glistening stems and were soon lost in a silver verdant distance.

Out again into the open on the borders of the Lakes, and by the Cascade we see empty carriages. Messieurs and mesdames have descended, and are watching the waterfall, the flood, and the pleasure boats. Messieurs stroll away a short distance to enjoy a cigarette, and mesdames enjoy a good mutual stare, and make mental memoranda as to each other's costume. What a wonderful thing is that gaze of a well-bred woman! that sees everything, while it seems to look at nothing. The riotous gymnastic exercises of smoking and staring exhausted, messieurs and mesdames reascend, and the cocher is ordered to drive to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, or the Pré Catelan, or the Plaine de Longchamps—that smooth, well-shaven sheet of moss, with its white cardboard houses, and dry-land junks

and josses dotting its green surface, as daisies dot an unpicked lawn—and so home either by the dusty Avenue de Neuilly, or airy Auteuil and picturesque Passy: the former of these charming suburbs, by the way, is rich in literary associations, for there dwelt Boileau, Molière, Chapelé, Baron, Racine, and La Fontaine. The celebrated Madame Helvétius too resided there, that devoted widow, who, to remain true to the memory of her lost husband, refused offers of marriage from Turgot and from Benjamin Franklin. Passy was the pied-à-terre of a beauty of our own day, Bé-ranger.

Where is there a route more charming than that from Paris to Versailles, with the view of the valley of Sèvres, the road leading to the Arc de Triomphe, and the heights of Montmartre crowning the distant city? The pretty little maisons de campagne, and the drying-grounds of the blanchisseuses are picturesque as a scene at the Opéra! and then Versailles itself! Not to be commonplace, its associations, memories, and old historical renown rush through the brain and fill the mind with a vague wonder, as a railway train tears over a landscape and leaves a track of fleecy smoke behind it. Monsieur Vatout, in his 'Souvenirs historiques des Résidences royales de France,' describes Versailles—and we will not weaken the force of his description by translating it—in these words:

'Le génie de l'homme luttant contre la nature, les fleuves détournés de leurs cours pour apporter leurs eaux dans les lits de marbre, une armée occupant ses loisirs à ces immenses travaux, tous les arts à la fois rivalisant de zèle pour égaler la grandeur de la pensée qui les avait convoqués, un palais plus splendide que tous les palais des rois, s'élevant sur les plans de Mansart, et se décorant des trésors du pinceau de Lebrun, des jardins merveilleux dessinés par Le Nôtre, et ornés des chefs-d'œuvre du Puget et de Girardon, une maison souveraine prodiguant par millions les riches tributs de ses conquêtes, une

cour fastueuse ajoutant par son luxe à l'éclat de ce royal séjour; enfin, ces premières fêtes ordonnées par Colbert, animées par Molière, célébrées par La Fontaine, et présidées par un demi-dieu, rayonnant de jeunesse, d'amour et de gloire: tel fut le spectacle que présenta la pompeuse création du palais de Versailles.'

Bating the 'demi-dieu'—which we think an inappropriate compliment applied to little periwigged King Louis—this is not an overcharged description. Our own lovely Sydenham has rendered us fastidious in our judgment of gardens; but those of Versailles—if we consider the means at the disposal of Louis XIV., and of Napoleon I., the absence of steam power, and the appliances of modern science—will bear comparison. And à propos of steam and history, this question is suggested: Had locomotives and iron-plated Monitors been invented in 1800, would the Little Corporal have died a prisoner at St. Helena? Perhaps not. Perhaps he might—but it is useless to enter on the question of what he might have done. It would only lead us into that Leviathan labyrinth of mental bewilderment and cerebral chaos suggested by the words of the Ethiopian melody, 'Supposing I was you? Supposing you was me? Suppose we all were somebody else?' Here the faculties refuse to budge one conjecture further—and even the poet himself, who opened this enormous flood-gate of probable possibility, was compelled to conclude his quatrain with: 'I wonder who we should be!' True, O poet! who, indeed!

Mais revenons à Versailles—to its green alleys, cool fountains, chiselled statues, and cut hedges. Such is the fickleness of man that we have ceased to wonder at its waterworks, once the pride and envy of surrounding nations. Our own Grandes Eaux at Sydenham surpass them. Now-a-days compressed vapour is paramount—and there can be no question that the Genius of the Ring, in the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments,' has long been an overrated architect—the secret of

his instantaneous erection of Aladdin's palace was steam. It is steam that makes the world go round, and enables us haughty Britons to look coldly and critically on the splashing and spouting sea-horses of Versailles!

The bold and turbaned Zouaves guarding the gates look strikingly Asiatic at the portals of the palace of a Christian king; and the presence of three or four old ladies, guardians of as many stalls heaped up with cakes, lollipops, syrups, and lemonade, is not in keeping with this manufactured magnificence. But what would you? All sorts of folks come here, marchionesses, milliners, and masons, princes, pawnbrokers, and piem—*we will not pursue the alliteration further*; and when one has thirst, one must drink, and one can obtain nothing spirituous or vinous in the gardens—the liquors are all pastoral as elderberries, and apparently, from their treacly consistence, not much nastier than elder wine.

The society on the terraces and in the alleys, in April last, was of a mixed description. It is a wonderful word that 'mixed,' as applied to men and women. How can human beings '*mix?*' Towering in height and dignity was the inevitable British tourist, happy in the possession of a catalogue and a strapped *sac de voyage*. The British tourist is in great request at Versailles. No sooner does he alight from the omnibus or cab, look at the palace depreciatingly and say, 'Pouvez-vous?' than the guides and touters are upon him, and mark him for their own. He is not affable, the British tourist, but perhaps he makes up in liberality, in which case he must be very liberal indeed.

Scattered over the grounds are dozens of young mulattoes, dressed in the costume of the Ecole Militaire. If it be a holiday with them, they seem to bear it composedly and almost sadly, as if they would prefer being of a fairer complexion, not to afford so strong a contrast to the statues near and around them. In the Bosquet d'Apollon, half a dozen young men are climbing and endeavouring to hurt themselves with

every prospect of success. 'Aie!' cries a gardien, 'Descend!'

'Why?' ask the young men.

'You will break your legs,' says the gardien.

'We are used to it!' is the reply of the climbers, who continue escalaing with increased enjoyment.

All the world, his wife and family, have seen Versailles, which is fortunate for those who have to attempt to describe it—for it is indescribable. The eye in kindred action with the mind wearies with the embarras des richesses: the Salon des Pendules, the Cabinet des Chasses, the salle à manger where Louis XIV. welcomed Molière as a guest, and helped him to the wing of a fowl, to the intense indignation of the astonished courtiers, the Salle des Croisades, the Salle des Etats Généraux, the Salon d'Hercule, the Salle du Sacre, the Salon de Diane, the Salons de Mars, Mercury, Apollo, the Salon de la Guerre, the Salon de la Paix, the Salon de la Reine, and the Grande Galerie des Glaces, though they have been 'done' over and over and over again, are always wonderful—but they are to be seen, not spoken of. And it is in these gorgeous halls that the British tourist, who has a catalogue, begins to hate that ingenious instrument of torture, for it compels him to look upon its stereotyped pages, instead of absorbing the wealth of art around him.

The fourteenth Louis is so often represented in paint and marble, that after an hour's slide over the polished floor, you begin to detest that potent monarch with the intensity of a sans-culotte. Surely his whole existence must have been passed in 'posing' to various artists—and what a mercy for posterity that photography 'wasn't then invented!' He must have been a strange man, that high-souled, high-heeled little great one! In one of the ballets in which he disported himself, Night summoned the Twelve Dark Hours, who appeared with the sleeping Aurora as a prisoner. Aurora woke, and wherever she ran, was obstructed by the Dark Hours; the Twelve Hours of Day came to her rescue

and chased away the Hours of Night. At the back, an arcade fermée opened, and the king himself appeared, dressed as the Sun, and wearing the cordon bleu over his coat of rays—Glory behind him, and the Muses and Graces on his right and left. The Gloomy Hours fell upon their knees before the Great Cause of Light, Heat, and Vegetation, and the admiring court formed an industrious claque. By this allegorical arrangement, Louis kindly complimented Nature, and decorated the Sun. His favourites fooled their 'demi-dieu' to the top of his bent. Clouds were shaped like camels, weasels, and whales, if he thought so. Nay, an if he chose, they were camels, weasels, and whales, whales spouting verses in his honour.

No river is spanned by so many beautiful bridges as the sparkling Seine; no flood washes the banks of so many royal residences. Close to magnificent Versailles, arid, glaring, white, and stony on the one side, as green and glassy on the other, is St. Cloud, with its snug château, and cool, umbrageous Parc. Versailles is to St. Cloud what Windsor is to Osborne. Versailles is for receptions, levees, ambassadorial compliments, state balls, and pageants. St. Cloud is a royal home, where royalty may hide, domestic and unseen. Its deserted alleys, lonely walks, and solitary glades speak with a mournful hush of past grandeur and present neglect. It has but one sign of interest in the new Paris of 1864: Near the famous cascade is planted, in proud scarlet, green and yellow lustre, a roundabout. For a small sum, the lieges of the Emperor may turn and turn and turn again, and still go on to the music of an organ. This is the only concession mossy, velvety, leafy, lovely, old St. Cloud makes to the modern appetite for ignoble amusement.

By the borders of the silver Seine, as we have said, palaces are as plentiful as turnpikes near the Thames, and the approaches to them are so delightful that it is strange the equestrian and vehicular classes do not pass more of their time in the saddle or on the box; but, despite

the Emperor's patronage of races, the French will never be a 'hossy' or a 'trappy' people. They have more in their environs to tempt them than poor Londoners. There is St. Germain, with its triple attraction of town, château, and forest; St. Denis, for those who wish to be severely and sepulchrally historical, and find a pleasure in the end of a drive that permits them to see the famous caveaux where royal corpses are classed chronologically, from Clovis to Louis the Eighteenth. There is Neuilly, with its blackened ruins—a recollection of the revolution of '48; Montmorency, fresh, fertile, and delicious, with its valley, lake, and literary memories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau; Fontainebleau, where the first Napoleon made his adieu to his Guard: and here again we may quote the Chronicle of the Drum:

'He called for our old battle standard,  
One kiss to the eagle he gave,  
"Dear eagle," he said, "may this kiss  
Long sound in the hearts of the brave!"  
'Twas thus that Napoleon left us,  
Our people were weeping and mute,  
As he passed through the lines of his guard,  
And our drums beat the notes of salute.'

We defy even the British tourist—and for flesh and blood he is moderately impulsive—to stand in the Cour du Cheval Blanc, and not feel that in France the cocked-hat is a representative institution.

By the side of every road that leads from Paris, there is a sight that we do not find in our own suburbs. The broad well-kept path is provided with seats, whereon congregate comfortable-looking bonnes, round whom cluster children of all ages, from the infant of two months to the comparatively elderly young lady and gentleman of six years. The bonnes have an especially maternal manner and appearance. Black of eye, brown of tint, broad of shoulder, and kind of tongue, they are the centre of that domestic solar system, round which toddle and tumble in eccentric orbits those wondrous planets, little children. Nowhere can be found a pleasanter picture than a family group of that lively people, so erro-

neously supposed to hold domestic ties in disregard. Three generations of the same blood, with the bonne as a connecting link, will sit beneath the shade of trees, and talk, and laugh, and amuse each other, with a feeling of home enjoyment that we, in this colder climate, think inseparable from the fireside. There will be madame the grandmother, tending the youngest born but one; madame the mother knitting, her eldest son watching her black eyes with a pair of visual organs of exactly the same pattern and colour, and thinking what a wonderful person is 'man-mam,' and how, as soon he grows up, he means to marry her, in order to have her always by his side. The bonne holds the latest arrival, and now and then the mother takes her eyes from off her needles to feast them with a sight of her sleeping child. A few yards further on, a grandfather will conduct his little granddaughter by the hand—the child an infinitely graver person than her grandsire, for it is a strange thing that in France, where adults are lively, children are sombre even in their play. When they dig up sand with little wooden spades, they dig not as do the British urchin, for the sake of worms, or to break the spade, or make a letter, but with the gravity of a geologist, and the intensity of purpose of a digger. Perhaps they dig, as the nation fights—for an idea!

In Paris, says a modern social proverb, Il n'y a que des vieux qui sont jeunes, et des jeunes qui sont vieux; and certainly men on the other side of forty-five are more agreeable than the young fellows who affect the English manner, and engrave the eyeglass of to-day upon the stick-up collar of fifteen years ago. Hippolyte, Auguste, and Edouard must learn to play as boisterously as Jack, Tom, and Harry, to wear out the knees of their trousers with as much facility, to be as unconscious of their neckerchiefs, and as indifferent to wet feet. At the same time, Jack, Tom, and Harry may derive some excellent hints from Hippolyte, Auguste, and Edouard. They may be more submissive to their elders, less sheepish before strangers, and not so addicted to throwing stones. The high tone of our public schools has abolished the cat-skinning, frog-pelting, and dog-tormenting villainy of former days, and we hope to see our best sort of boys perfect little Bayards, as gentle as courageous, and as amiable as determined.

Adieu, or rather, à bientôt, charming high roads round Paris! By your own population, your delightful views, crisp houses, beautiful air and blossom-scented breezes are neglected for the lazy cushions, hot oil, and engine smoke of the luxurious railway.

T. W. R.



## THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

## CHAPTER V.

THE GRESHAMS OF LONDON.\*



COSTUME OF ENGLISH, FLEMISH, PRUSSIAN, AND VENETIAN MERCHANTS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.  
[From Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi Moderni*, Venice, 1590.]

\* A paper entitled 'The Favourites of Fortune; or, The Greshams,' appeared in 'London Society' for November, 1862. For the completeness of the present series of sketches it is necessary that the subject

should be treated again; but in doing so we have here spoken as briefly as possible of the incidents there detailed, and drawn our illustrations from comparatively new sources.

'BECAUSE,' said Cardinal Morton, Lord Chancellor of England, in his opening address to Henry VII.'s first Parliament, assembled in November, 1487—' because it is the King's desire that this peace, wherein he hopeth to govern and maintain you, do not bear only unto you leaves for you to sit under the shade of them in safety, but also should bear you fruit of riches, wealth, and plenty, therefore his Grace prays you to take into consideration matters of trade, as also the manufactures of the kingdom, and to repress the bastard and barren employment of moneys to usury and unlawful exchanges, that they may be, as their natural use is, turned upon commerce and lawful and royal trading.' That advice, excellent in the main, and coinciding exactly with the temperament of the people to whom it was addressed, found plenty of followers. Englishmen had learnt from the example of such men as William de la Pole and Richard Whittington that commerce, wisely pursued, could not fail to bring honour and wealth, both to each individual trader and to the nation at large; and as soon as the firm rule of the Tudors was established they applied themselves to it with notable zeal. The miserable period of the Wars of the Roses, if it did nothing else, served to rid the country of many restrictions introduced in the age of feudalism, and to make fresh room for the development of free thought and independent action. The supremacy of the barons was brought to an end, and the supremacy of the towns—that is, of the merchants and manufacturers who made the strength and wealth of towns—initiated. Many causes led to this result. Under any government, the commercial spirit would have shown itself in unprecedented force, but in no way, perhaps, could it have received much greater encouragement than from the prudent and energetic government of Henry VII. and his successors. The example of foreign adventurers, moreover, the seamen who opened the way to India, Southern Africa, and America, and the traders who followed in their track and turned

their discoveries to practical account, had a marked effect on English trade.

Englishmen, however, now foremost in the dominion of the sea and possessors of by far the greatest portion of colonial wealth, were behind-hand in the race of maritime enterprise led by Columbus and Vasco de Gama. For a time, the merchants who stayed at home, or, at any rate, within the long-established boundaries of European trade, took precedence of the merchants who went far away to find new sources of wealth, and to use them in new methods. Hence the Greshams, representatives of Tudor domestic commerce at its noblest, claim our notice before the Hawkinses, whose history will show us something of the way in which our colonial empire began.

The Greshams are first found in Norfolk. John Gresham, gentleman, of Gresham, lived in the latter part of the fourteenth century, and inherited a respectable patrimony from ancestors who seem to have given their name to the district.\* James Gresham, his son, was a lawyer, living chiefly in London, in attendance at King's Bench in 1443, and apparently a clerk or secretary to Sir William Paston, the judge, whose cause in the civil war he zealously espoused between 1443 and 1471. He became lord of the manor of East Beckham, and transferred the family seat from Gresham to Holt, a bleak and desolate spot on the northern shore of Norfolk, about four miles from the sea. It is likely that in his later years he was something of a merchant, the neighbouring towns, full of Flemish settlers and convenient for intercourse with the coast towns of Flanders, being well adapted for amateur commerce. Certain it is, at any rate, that, whereas of his son John we know nothing but that he married a rich wife, his four grandsons were brought up to trade, having London for their headquarters.

These grandsons, all living in the time of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., were William, Thomas, Richard, and

\* See Table of Descent, p. 451.

John.\* William, the eldest, is not much known to us. He was a mercer and merchant adventurer of London, and a freeman of the Mercers' Company, but he seems to have lived often at the family mansion, and also to have resided much abroad, besides making journeys in pursuit of his calling. 'It appears,' says Hakluyt, 'out of certain ancient ledgers of Master John Gresham, that between the years 1511 and 1534 many English ships traded to the Levant,' among them 'the "Mary George," wherein was factor William Gresham'; and we find that in 1533 he was appointed governor of the English merchants resident at Antwerp. Thomas was also a merchant trading to the chief towns of the Mediterranean; but being frightened by a ghost story, he gave up business at an early age and became a priest. The commercial interests of England were to be chiefly served by the two younger brothers, Richard and John.

Both were brought up in London as apprentices to Mr. John Middleton, mercer and merchant of the staple at Calais, of whose famous kindred we shall see more hereafter. Richard was admitted to the freedom of the Mercers' Company in 1507, John in 1517. Both strove well from the beginning—the elder brother finding his interest in residing for the most part in London and going occasionally to Antwerp and

the other near trading towns on the Continent, while the younger chose a line of business that took him oftener and farther from home. Thus we find that in 1537, while Richard was serving as sheriff of the City of London, John was busy in the Mediterranean. At the island of Scio he hired a Portuguese vessel and filled it with goods to be conveyed to England; but the owner and master of the ship took it instead to his own country, and there disposed of the cargo, worth twelve thousand ducats, on his own account. The theft was brought under the notice of Henry VIII., who wrote an angry complaint to the King of Portugal; but the value of the merchandize does not seem to have been restored. That John Gresham had influence enough to obtain his sovereign's help in this matter, however, shows him to have been already a man of mark. In 1537 he was living in London, and acting as sheriff, his brother being promoted to the office of Lord Mayor at the same time, and both being honoured with knighthood on the occasion of their election. This year, 1537, was a memorable one in London history. Sir Richard Gresham, as chief magistrate, petitioned the King, 'for the aid and comfort of the poor, sick, blind, aged, and impotent persons, being not able to help themselves nor having no place certain where they may be refreshed

\* The following table of descent will save the insertion of many dry details in the text:—

<i>William Gresham,</i> of Holt and Lon- don, mercer, d. 1548.	<i>Thomas Gresham,</i> clerk, d. 1558.	<i>Sir Richard Gresham</i> —=Audrey, daughter of William Lynne, esq., of Blyth, of Stratton, Norfolk, esquire.	<i>Sir John Gresham,</i> of Tilsey, in Sur- rey, and London, knight, d. 23 Oct. 1542.
<i>Sir John Gresham,</i> knight, b. 1547, d. 1560.	<i>SIR THOMAS GRESHAM</i> —=Anne, daughter of William Feroley, of West Creting, in Suffolk, esquire, and widow of William Read, esquire; d. 23 Nov. 1596.		
	<i>Richard Gresham,</i> b. ? 1548, d. 1564.		
			2 G 2

or lodged at till they be holpen and cured of their diseases and sickness,' that the three hospitals known as St. Mary's Spital, St. Bartholomew's Spital, and St. Thomas's Spital, and the new abbey by Tower Hill, might be restored to their first design. These buildings, he says, 'were founded of good devotion by ancient fathers, and endowed with great possessions and rents, only for the relief, comfort, and helping of the poor, and not to the maintenance of canons, priests, and monks to live in pleasure, nothing regarding the miserable people living in every street, offending every clean person passing by the way, with their filthy and nasty savourings'; and he thinks it better 'to refresh, maintain, and comfort a great number of poor, needy, sick, and indigent persons, and also heal and cure their infirmities frankly and freely, by physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries,' than to support 'a small number' of canons, priests, and monks, for their own profit only and not for the common utility of the realm.'

That was an argument which Henry VIII. was nothing loth to listen to. The three hospitals became city property, and were from this time for the most part wisely governed for the benefit of the poor, the sick, and the insane. Out of the general breaking up of old monastic institutions, Sir Richard Gresham also obtained for his own Mercers' Company a grant of the house of St. Thomas of Acre, since converted into the Mercers' Chapel in Cheapside. Other benefits he procured for himself. Five successive grants of church lands were at different times made to him by King Henry, and in 1540 he was chosen commissioner for taking the value of the various abbeys, monasteries, and the like, situated in and about London. More than consorted even with independence of spirit and love of freedom, he followed the king in his varying course of theological faith and religious persecution. He assisted in the punishing of Papists; he was in 1541, along with his brother, put on a commission for inquiring into repressing the Pro-

testant heresies done in the city and diocese of London.

But work, better and better worth remembering, was also done by Sir Richard Gresham. He laboured hard to obtain for London the great boon which was at last conferred through the hands of his more famous son. In the year of his mayoralty, he wrote an earnest letter to Sir Thomas Audelay, the Lord Privy Seal, to urge the procurement of some lands and houses in Lombard Street, to be used in constructing a Burse or Exchange, on the model of that long established at Antwerp. The whole building, he estimated, would cost hardly more than 2000*l.*, the half of which he could probably collect during his year of office, and, if set up, would be 'very beautiful to the City, and also for the honour of our sovereign lord the King.' In 1538 he again urged the work, sending a full statement of costs and sizes to Secretary Cromwell. But nothing was done for seven-and-twenty years.

In another attempt Sir Richard was more successful. An unwise proclamation, forbidding merchants to barter one commodity for another, on the supposition that the exchequer would lose its due, having been issued, he wrote to Audelay, showing how *every* restriction upon free trade was mischievous, more or less ruinous, in the first place, to the merchants themselves, and in the second, to the Crown, which could only be enriched with a portion of their profits. 'If it shall not please the King's goodness,' he said, 'shortly to make a proclamation that all manner of merchants, as well his subjects as all other, may ever use and exercise their exchanges and recharges frankly and freely, as they have heretofore done, without any let or impediment, it will cause a great many cloths and kerseys to be left unsold in the clothmaker's hands, if it be not out of hand remedied; for Bartholomew Fair will be shortly here, which is the chief time for the utterance of the said cloths and kerseys. Also there is divers merchants that will shortly prepare themselves toward Bordeaux for provisions of wines; and for lack of ex-

changes I do suppose there will be conveyed some gold amongst them. I am sure, my lord, that these exchanges and rechanges do much to the stay of the said gold in England, which would else be conveyed over. I pray your good lordship to pardon me, for as God shall help me I write not this for none commodity for myself, but for the discharge of my duty towards the King's majesty, and for that I do know it shall be for the common wealth of his subjects, and for the utterance of the commodities of this realm; for the merchants can no more be without exchanges and rechanges than the ships in the sea can be without water.' That sensible and straightforward appeal caused a reversal of the proclamation.

Sir Richard Gresham was too well-informed and clear-headed a man for the advisers of the Crown to despise. Often, during the last dozen years of his life, we find him employed on financial business; sometimes even as an ambassador, or a negotiator with foreign ambassadors, both in Flanders and in England. Nor did he neglect his own. Dying in 1549, he left to his wife and two sons property yielding an annual income, very great at that time, according to the then value of money, of 85*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Sir John Gresham seems to have been almost richer, and in no respect less worthy than his brother. He assisted that brother in all his benevolent projects, and found others for himself. To him especially, we are told, does London owe the transference from Romish to Protestant hands, and the consequent improvement, of Bethlehem Hospital, long established as a madhouse under monkish government. In 1546 he bought of his eldest brother William the family house at Holt, and turned it into a free grammar-school, richly endowed with funds, which unprincipled and negligent trustees have, to a great extent, diverted from their proper channels. Yet in this same year he was rich enough to lend 40,000*l.*, representing nearly half a million in our money, to the Crown; and in 1547, while holding the office of Lord Mayor, he revived,

for the amusement of the citizens, the expensive pageant of the 'marching watch.' He died in 1556, leaving much money to be divided among the London charities, or in ways of his own choosing. A sum of 100*l.*, was left to go in marriage portions to a certain number of poor maids, and nearly twice as much was to be spent in buying broadcloth to be made into gowns for a hundred and twenty poor men and women.

There was another Sir John Gresham, the eldest son of Sir Richard, born in 1518. He was a soldier as well a merchant. For his prowess at the battle of Pinkie, in 1547, he was knighted by the Lord Protector Somerset; and in 1550 he was admitted to the Mercers' Company. In 1553 he equipped three ships on a trading expedition to Muscovy, two of which were wrecked on the way; and under the year 1555 we find his name first on the list of English merchants trading to Muscovy. He died in 1560, at the age of forty-two.

Much more famous was his brother Thomas, the greatest merchant prince, save Whittington perhaps, ever owned by the City of London. He was born, as it seems, in 1519, at one of his father's houses in Norfolk. His mother died when he was three years old, and we know nothing of the early influences by which he was trained to be the conspicuous ornament of a good and noble family. His father, even had the education of one's own children been thought proper work for the fathers of those days, was too busy a man to do very much at home. He was wanted at his counting-house in Lombard Street and at the council-table of the Guildhall. Chiefly resident in London, he was often at Antwerp or Brussels, buying and selling merchandize for himself, and negotiating loans or purchasing stores for his sovereign. Sir Richard Gresham, however, was not unmindful of his son. When he was about thirteen or fourteen, he sent him to Gonville, now Caius, College, Cambridge, where he spent three years under the personal instruction, as it seems, of Dr. Caius, one of the founders of the school.

Then he came back to London, and was apprenticed, in 1535, to his uncle John. In 1543 he was admitted to the freedom of the Merchants' Company, and fairly started in the family calling, 'to the which science,' he says in a letter written later in life, 'I was bound prentice eight years, to come by the experience and knowledge that I have. Nevertheless, I need not have been prentice, for that I was free by my father's copy; albeit my father, being a wise man, knew it was to no purpose, except I were bound prentice to the same, whereby to come by the experience and knowledge of all kinds of merchandize.' He straightway set about using his experience. In this same year we find him in Antwerp, helping to buy up gunpowder and saltpetre for Henry VIII.'s warlike preparations against France; and henceforth, for the third of a century there seems to have been no flagging to his zeal. As early as the spring of 1545, his name was included with those of his father and his uncle among the wealthiest traders of England. A large quantity of English merchandize having been seized at Antwerp, by the Emperor Charles V. of Germany, great misery was looked for by all the smaller men thus injured; but Richard and William and Thomas Gresham, it was thought, would really be gainers, as their large stocks of silk and other goods would now be sold at a higher price than, but for the seizure, could have been expected.

Thomas Gresham was not, however, wholly occupied with trade. Early in 1544 died William Read, a rich citizen and mercer of London, making his friend Sir Richard Gresham his executor, with a bequest of 10*l.* and a black gown. It was doubtless at Sir Richard's instigation that Thomas took to himself the larger portion of the estate, before the year was ended, by marrying his widow. The choice was not a happy one. Mistress Anne Read was of good family, and aunt, by marriage, of Francis Bacon; it is likely that she brought her husband a good deal of money, and she certainly encouraged him in storing it

up; but she seems to have urged him to no worthier pursuit. His letters contain numerous allusions to her, more or less expressive of kindness and sympathy; but there is no good evidence of his liking for her, and none of anything in her that deserved to be liked. One child, a lad named Richard, who died at the age of sixteen, was born of this marriage; and it was a source, we are told, of frequent discord between husband and wife that a daughter of the merchant's, but not of his wife's, was brought up in the Gresham household and treated as kindly and carefully as her brother until she was married to Sir Nathaniel Bacon, elder brother of Francis.

Gresham's marriage did not keep him much in England. For some years he appears to have lived chiefly in Antwerp, with frequent journeys thence to Bruges and London. Antwerp had for many generations been the great meeting-place of the leading merchants of Europe. In a former chapter we have seen Sir William de la Pole residing there as early as 1338, in the capacity of mayor of the English staple and overseer of financial matters on behalf of Edward III. Other men held the ill-defined office, with few intermissions, for more than two hundred years, their business being generally to negotiate loans with wealthy merchants and money-lenders, and also to keep their sovereign informed as to all the important foreign matters known to them. When Thomas Gresham first went out to Antwerp, Stephen Vaughan was thus employed, and he was succeeded in 1546 by Sir William Dansell, a good-natured man, but not much of a merchant, and no financier at all. In 1549 he was reproved for a grievous piece of carelessness, by which, it was alleged, 40,000*l.* was lost to the English Crown. He answered, that he had done his very best—that he could not have done better if he had spent 40,000*l.* lives on the business, and that what he had done was with the assistance of 'one Thomas Gresham.' But the members of Edward VI.'s council were not satisfied. When Dansell wrote to say, 'It seemeth me that

you suppose me a very blunt beast, without reason and discretion,' they did not deny the charge. They thought, and thought wisely, that 'one Thomas Gresham' would act better as principal than as assistant. In the autumn of 1551, says the young man himself—at this time thirty-two years old—'I was sent for unto the council, and brought by them unto the King's majesty, to know my opinion what way, with least charge, his Majesty might grow out of debt. And after my device was declared, the King's highness and the council required me to take the room'—that is, the office—in hand, without my suit or labour for the same.'

Gresham and his 'device' were certainly needed. At this time the fair interest on Edward's loans to foreign merchants amounted to 40,000*l.* a year; and this burden was increased many times by the greed of the money-lenders, who, at every renewal of a debt, took the opportunity of forcing upon his Majesty some bit of jewelry or other useless article at a fancy price. Here, for instance, is an extract from King Edward's private journal, in 1551, a few months before Gresham became his agent. The Fulcare referred to appear to have been the Fuggers, the richest traders of the day, turned into noblemen by Charles V. of Germany. 'April 25. A bargain made with the Fulcare for about 60,000*l.*, that in May and August should be paid, for the deferring of it: first, that the Fulcare should put it off for ten in the hundred: secondly, that I should buy 12,000 marks weight at six shillings the ounce, to be delivered at Antwerp, and so conveyed over: thirdly, that I should pay 100,000 crowns for a very fair jewel, four rubies, marvellous big, one orient and great diamond, and one great pearl.' Are there many worse bargains recorded in the note-books of spendthrifts, the dupes of conscienceless money-lenders, now-a-days?

It was to put down this abuse that Thomas Gresham was appointed King's Factor in December, 1551, or January, 1552. Personally, or by deputy, he filled the office, with a

gap of about three years during Queen Mary's reign, for a quarter of a century. The zeal with which he worked is best shown by his extant correspondence in the State Paper Office, for the most part carefully condensed in Mr. Burdon's '*Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham.*'

Over and over again, in these years, but most of all under Edward VI, Gresham was instructed to effect fresh loans, and by the use of soft words and showy compromises to postpone the payment of the debts already incurred. No one knew better how to do this; but he did not like the task. 'It should be no small grief to me,' he wrote in August, 1552, to the famous and infamous Duke of Northumberland, 'that, in being his Majesty's agent, any merchant strangers should be forced to forbear their money against their wills, which matter, from henceforth, must be otherwise foregone, or else in the end the dishonesty of this matter shall hereafter be laid upon my neck. . . . To be plain with your Grace, according to my bounden duty, verily if there be not some other way taken for the payment of his Majesty's debts but to force men from time to time to prolong it, I say to you, the end thereof shall neither be honourable nor profitable to his Highness. In consideration whereof, if there be none other ways taken forthwith, this is to most humbly beseech your Grace that I may be discharged of this office of agentship. For otherwise I see in the end I shall receive shame and discredit thereby, to my utter undoing for ever; which is the smallest matter of all, so that the King's Majesty's honour and credit be not spoiled thereby, and specially in a strange country.'

That was bold language for a merchant to use to the chief advisers—in this case, directors—of the crown. If the members of King Edward's council winced at it, however, they could not deny its honesty and truth any more than they could reject the 'poor and simple advice' offered to them by Gresham. This was, that a certain sum be put by

weekly and sent to him, to be invested in judicious ways, and used in paying off the debts as they fell due. ‘ If this be followed up, I do not doubt but in two years to bring the King’s Majesty wholly out of debt, which I pray God to send me life to see! ’ Of course the scheme found favour; and of course it was soon discarded. For eight weeks £200. a week was sent to Gresham; but then it was stayed, ‘ because that manner of exchange is not profitable for the King’s Majesty.’ But Gresham did not desist from his entreaties. Again and again he urged a policy of retrenchment, and suggested several devices—many of them, it must be admitted, quite opposed to the modern views of free trade—for improving the finances of the English crown and people. Sometimes he took the law into his own hands, and adopted hard measures against both home and foreign merchants. ‘ I have so plagued the strangers,’ he said, in a letter from Antwerp to the Council, detailing the way in which he had improved the rate of exchange, ‘ that from henceforth they will beware how they meddle with the exchange for London; and as for our own merchants, I have put them in such fear that they dare not meddle, by giving them to understand that I would advertise your honours, if they should be the occasion thereof, which matter I can soon spy out, having the brokers of exchange, as I have, at my commandment; for there is never a burse but I have a note what money is taken up by exchange, as well by the stranger as Englishmen.’ ‘ My uncle, Sir John Gresham,’ we read in another letter penned in London, ‘ hath not a little stormed with me for the setting of the price of the exchange; and saith that it lies in me now to do the merchants of this nation pleasure, to the increase of my poor name, amongst the merchants for ever.’ Sir John Gresham was in the wrong. By his more patriotic conduct the young man won for himself, amongst the merchants for ever, even a greater name than his uncle could have expected to come from selfish policy. Perhaps Sir John lived to

admit this himself; at any rate, he had not long to live before the natural generosity of his temper led him to forget his own great losses and those of his friends, all caused by this new project of his nephew’s, in admiration of his pluck and perseverance. ‘ He and I was at great words,’ adds the reformer, ‘ like to fall out; but ere we departed we drank to each other.’

That was in May, 1553. At about this time the merchant presented his sovereign with ‘ a great present,’ —a pair of long Spanish silk stockings; ‘ for you shall understand,’ says Stow, ‘ that King Henry VIII. did wear only cloth hose, or hose cut out of ell-broad taffeta, or that by great chance there came a pair of Spanish stockings out of Spain.’ Edward was not thankless for either the great or the little favours. In June of this year, three weeks before his death, he gave to Gresham lands worth £100. a year, saying, as he handed him the charter, ‘ You shall know that you have served a king!’

The merchant also served two queens. ‘ When the king your brother died,’ he said, in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, ‘ for reward of my service the Bishop of Winchester’ (the renowned Gardiner) ‘ sought to undo me; and whatever I said in these matters’ (of finance) ‘ I should not be credited.’ Yet he held his place for some time, laboured hard to maintain Queen Mary’s financial credit, and received not only her thanks, but also those of her graceless husband Philip II. Better fortune came to him, however, with the accession of Elizabeth. Hearing of the change of sovereigns, he hurried from Antwerp to Hatfield to render homage, and on the 20th of November, 1558, as he wrote to his old friend Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, ‘ Her Highness promised me, by the faith of a queen, that she would not only *keep one ear shut to hear me*, but also, if I did her none other service than I had done to King Edward, her late brother, and Queen Mary, her late sister, she would give me as much land as ever they both did; which two promises made me a young man again,

and caused me to enter upon this great change again with heart and courage; and thereupon her Majesty gave me her hand, to kiss it, and I accepted this great charge.' His first act in fulfilling it was the writing of a letter to the Queen, showing how the nation had fallen into the debt which she found, and how its credit was to be regained. The evil, he said, sprang from three causes: in the first place, the great debasing of the coin of the realm by Henry VIII.; in the second, the wars that he waged on the Continent, which made it necessary for so much gold to be carried to Flanders, and there disposed of; in the third, the protective policy shown to the foreign merchants of the Steel Yard, allowing them to export wool and other articles for a lower duty than that claimed from English merchants. The remedy was five-fold:—'First, your Highness hath none other ways but, when time and opportunity serveth, to bring your base money into fine; secondly, not to restore the Steel Yard to their usurped privilege; thirdly, to grant as few licences as you can; fourthly, to come in as small debt as you can beyond seas; fifthly, to keep your credit, and specially with your own merchants, for it is they must stand by you, at all events, in your necessity.'

Gresham had defrayed Queen Mary's debts to the extent of 435,000*l.*; but, as he said in a letter to Cecil on the 1st of March following, there was a moiety of the Crown's outstanding debts, equal to 30,000*l.*, that must be got rid of in the following April and May. 'And for the payment thereof, and for keeping up of the exchange, the Queen's Majesty hath none other ways and help but to use her merchant adventurers. Wherein I do right well know they do stand very stout in the matter. Nevertheless, considering how much it doth import the Queen's Majesty's credit, of force she must use her merchants. And for the compassing thereof her Highness shall have good opportunity both to bargain and to bring them to what price her Majesty and you shall think most

convenient. First, it is to be considered that our English merchants have at least forty or fifty thousand cloths and kerseys lying upon their hands ready to be shipped, which they will begin to ship when they shall know to what point they shall trust their custom. Secondly, this matter must be kept secret, that it may not come to the merchants' knowledge that you do intend to use them, and to lay sure wait, when their last day of shipping shall be, and to understand perfectly at the customer's [custom-house officer's] hands, at the same day, whether all the cloths and kerseys be entered and shipped and water-borne; and being once all water-borne, then to make a stay of all the fleet, that none shall depart till further the Queen's pleasure be known; thirdly, that being once done, to command the customer to bring you in a perfect book of all such cloths, kerseys, cottons, lead, tin, and all other commodities, and the merchants' names, particularly what number every man hath shipped, and the just and total sum of the whole shipping; and thereby you shall know the number and who be the great doers.' When, in this remarkable way, the whole spring fleet of exports from the City of London was in the hands of the Government, Gresham showed it would be easy to compel the merchants to raise the rate of exchange from 20 to 25 Flemish shillings for the pound sterling. 'This,' he went on to say, 'will prove a more beneficial bargain to the Queen's Majesty, and to this her nation, than I will at present molest you withal; for it will raise the exchange to an honest price. As, for example, the exchange in King Edward's time, when I began this practice, was but 16*s.*; did I not raise it to 23*s.*, and paid his whole debts after at 20*s.* and 22*s.*, whereby wool fell in price from 26*s.* 8*d.* to 16*s.*, and cloths from 6*l.* a pack to 4*l.* and 3*l.* a pack, with all other our commodities and foreigners', whereby a number of clothiers gave over making of cloths and kerseys? Wherein there was touched no man but the merchant, for to save the prince's

honour ; which appeared to the face of the world that they were great losers ; but to the contrary in the end, when things were brought to perfection, they were great gainers thereby.'

That letter clearly shows us with what a high hand Gresham served his sovereigns. Tyrannical and unjust was his policy, if judged by modern standards ; but then all the financial policy of the Tudors was, in the abstract, tyrannical and unjust. Gresham adopted the crude and very defective system of political economy current in his day—perhaps he had not even as moderately sound an understanding of the principles of free trade as we have seen indicated in the speech of his father ; but we can hardly blame him for that. And, on the other hand, he is very greatly to be praised for the consummate skill with which he used his imperfect machinery to the advantage of his sovereigns and their dominions. If he erred, he did that which was no error in the eyes of many of the wisest and best in his day, and he managed his mistaken dealing so that the sufferings of the few were slight and the profits of the many were great. He helped Edward VI. and his government out of what seemed to be insuperable difficulties of finance, and in so doing abolished the grievous scandal by which an English monarch was left to the tender mercies of a crowd of foreign pawnbrokers. He served Queen Mary with equal zeal, until the un-English policy of her Spanish husband made it impossible for him to continue serving her in public. He aided Elizabeth during twenty years of her reign, and, even by the most violent measures which he took with that object, he helped to place the commerce of his country upon a firmer basis, and to win for it unprecedented honour from foreign nations.

We must not follow him through the details of his service as Royal Factor under Elizabeth. To do so would require a volume ; and when that was done, but a small part of his busy life would be described. His correspondence shows him to have been full of occupation in a

variety of ways. Unfortunately it is least explicit on the two points which we should be most glad to have elucidated—his domestic life and his doings as a merchant on his own account. We but dimly see him in his banker's shop in Lombard Street—the bankers of that time being wholesale dealers in every kind of merchandize as well as money-lenders and pawnbrokers ; and we know still less of his conduct and appearance in the privacy of his residence upstairs. But he was not often at home. Early in Queen Elizabeth's reign he left the bulk of his business in Antwerp, both as Royal Factor and as independent merchant, in the hands of Richard Clough, a very clever and very honest Welshman, in whom the prompt and expeditious merchant found only one fault. ' My servant,' he said, in a letter to Cecil, ' is very long and tedious in his writing.' Gresham, however, had repeatedly to go abroad on either his own or the Queen's account. A bill which he sent in on the 22nd of April, 1562, for the first three years and a half of Elizabeth's reign, ran thus :—

	£	s.	d.
Riding and posting charges . . . .	1,627	9	0
House hire . . . .	200	0	0
Diet and necessaries . . . .	1,819	3	5
Total . . . .	<u>£3,646</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>

which we must multiply by ten to get the approximate value in the currency of to-day.

Doubtless the money was well spent. Gresham travelled so quickly that once, in 1561, he fell from his horse and broke his leg. He had hard work to do in posting from place to place, borrowing money from one merchant, paying the debts due to another, and conciliating all by feasting them after the fashion for which Antwerp was famous during many centuries. And he was not employed simply on money-matters. Several times we find him going abroad on political errands. Now he is at Brussels, making inquiries as to the merits of the many foreign claimants for Queen Elizabeth's hand ; now at Antwerp, ap-

peasing the displeasure of William, the Prince of Orange, offended that the Queen has not yet sent him help in his and the Huguenots' strife against Philip of Spain and the Catholic party; and now again he is in the train of the Duchess of Parma, watching her movements, and sending home reports of them. There are few topics of moment at that period not touched upon in his letters to Cecil. In one, written as early as 1560, he writes to warn his mistress of the treacherous designs of Philip II. against England; let her, he says, 'make all her ships in a readiness, and suffer no mariners to go, no kind of ways, out of the realm;' in another, dated March, 1567, he rejoices in the fact that in Antwerp alone there are forty thousand Protestants willing to die rather than that the word of God should be put to silence; and in the same month he has to write and say that those forty thousand have been vanquished, and the Catholics are masters of Antwerp.

That victory of Jarnac brought to an end Gresham's employment as Queen's Factor at Antwerp. He hurried home from his last visit to give help to Elizabeth's advisers in London, and soon he was followed by Clough, and not a few of the Flemish merchants with whom he had had dealings, now houseless emigrants, though soon to grow wealthy again in England, and to add much, by their industry and honesty, to the wealth of their adopted country.

Henceforth Gresham seems to have lived constantly in England. He had been knighted in December, 1559, and from that time he ceased to reside at his shop in Lombard Street; but his own riches and the favour of the Queen enabled him to erect, or adapt to his use, far more imposing mansions at Freiwood in Norfolk, at Mayfield in Sussex, and elsewhere.

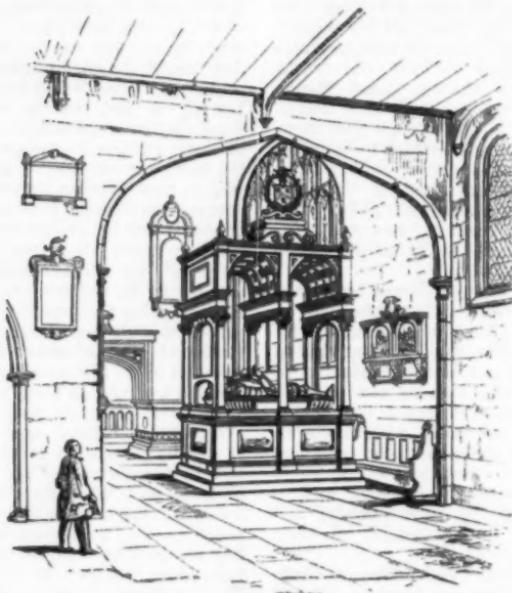
In these years, moreover, he was busy about the building of two much more memorable structures. Fuller sums up his claim to the honour of posterity by saying that he was 'the founder of two stately fabrics; the Royal Exchange, a kind of college for merchants; and Gresham College,

a kind of Exchange for scholars.' Gresham House, begun in 1559 and finished in 1562, was used first as a private residence. The Royal Exchange was in course of erection from 1566 to 1569. The idea had been started, as we have already noted, by Sir Richard Gresham in 1537, only six years after the Burse at Antwerp, the first building of the kind, had been opened. Scouted then, it was revived by Richard Clough, who wrote in 1561 one of his pleasant gossiping letters from Antwerp to Gresham, complaining of the London merchants, 'that do study for nothing else but for their own profit.' 'As, for example,' he continued, 'considering what a city London is, and that in so many years they have not found the means to make a Burse, but must walk in the rain, when it raineth, more like pedlars than merchants; and in this country, and all other, there is no kind of people that have occasion to meet, but they have a place meet for that purpose.'

Sir Thomas Gresham, remembering his father's project, and himself seeing the urgent need of a proper meeting-place for merchants, readily adopted his agent's hint, and forced it upon the attention of the London traders. It took him four years to do this. At last, early in 1565, the merchants and citizens of London agreed to the building, and by the autumn of 1566, seven hundred and fifty subscribers had set down their names for a total of about 4,000*l.* That sum served to buy the ground, and, as we learn from Stow, 'on the 7th of June, Sir Thomas Gresham laying the first stone of the foundation, being brick, accompanied with some aldermen, every of them laid a piece of gold, which the workmen took up, and forthwith followed upon the same with such diligence that by the month of November, in the year 1567, the same was covered with slate.' How the stone was brought from one of his estates in Norfolk, and the wood from another in Suffolk, while the slates, iron-work, wainscoting, and glass were sent from Antwerp by Richard Clough; how the noble building, with ample walks and rooms for merchants on

the basement and a hundred shops or booths above-stairs for retail dealers, was completed by the summer of 1569; and how it was christened on the 23rd of January, 1571, when 'the Queen's majesty, attended with her nobility, came from her house at the Strand, called Somerset House, and entered the City by Temple Bar, through Fleet Street, and, after dinner at Sir Thomas Gresham's in Bishopsgate Street, entered the Bourse on the south side,

and, when she had viewed every part thereof above the ground, especially the Pawn,'—the upper part with its hundred shops—' which was richly furnished with all sorts of the finest wares in the City, caused the same Bourse, by an herald and trumpet, to be proclaimed the Royal Exchange, and so to be called thenceforth, and not otherwise;' is it not all written in the book of the chronicles of Stow, as well as in every other trustworthy history of London?



SIR THOMAS GRESHAM'S TOMB IN ST. HELEN'S CHURCH, BISHOPSGATE.—(Page 461.)

Familiar also, to readers of this magazine, at any rate,\* in the affecting episode of Gresham's life in which, during three years and a half, from the summer of 1569 to the winter of 1572, he acted, much against his will, as gaoler to poor Lady Mary Grey, sister of the Lady Jane whom Northumberland's ambition made sham queen of England for a day. In that episode is included nearly all that is interesting

in our extant information about Sir Thomas Gresham's later years. He seems to have lived chiefly at his house in Bishopsgate Street, and quietly to have carried on his mercantile pursuits there and at the newly-built Exchange hard by. We see but little of him in the records of Court festivities or financial history. The work appointed for him he had done, and all the rewards he could hope for were his already.

Honest and enterprising in the path he had marked out for himself,

\* See 'London Society' for November, 1862, pp. 398-400.

steadfast in the service of his Queen and his country, and zealous for the dignity of both, he had little in common with the new generation of men just appearing in the prime of life. He had done his work in raising to an elevation never before attained the old-fashioned sort of English commerce, within the narrow limits of European civilization, which he had learnt from his fore-runners. In no unfriendly spirit, as we see from the numerous entries of his name as a subscriber to the exploring expeditions of Frobisher and others, but doubtless with the thought that he at any rate had no need to go out of the beaten track in which he had walked so well, he left the chivalrous company of Hawkinses and Raleighs, Drakes and Cavendishes to extend the empire of commerce to far-off regions, and to open up new and boundless sources of trade. And he was wise in doing so.

He died in harness. 'On Saturday, the 21st of November, between six and seven of the clock in the evening,' says Holinshed, 'coming from the Exchange to his house, which he had sumptuously builded,

in Bishopsgate Street, he suddenly fell down in his kitchen, and being taken up, was found speechless, and presently died.' On the 15th of December he was buried solemnly and splendidly, at a cost of 800*l.*, in St. Helen's church, hard by, a hundred poor men and a hundred poor women following him to the grave. His greedy wife and her greedy son, born of a former husband, his own son and daughter being already dead, inherited his immense wealth, and the indolence of the Mercers' Company, in the course of generations, robbed of nearly all its good effect the noble bequest, by which he intended to have converted his famous house into a yet more famous college for educating young merchants in those parts of knowledge best fitted to adorn and to improve their positions. But neither avarice nor apathy have been able to deprive the noblest name in the history of Tudor commerce of its place in the heart of every Englishman, or to undo the work of its greatest owner in forwarding the interests of trade and giving dignity to the merchant's calling.

H. R. F. B.



### NOTES ON DRESS AT A FANCY BALL.

MANY have been the comparisons by which the dress of our day has been judged. Many have been the arguments for its beauty or for its ugliness. The wide-flowing dresses with the sweeping trains of the ladies, and the straight plain coats and general blackness of gentlemen, all have been often discussed, but not often brought to fair trial. A fair field and no favour is, for once accorded, however, to all the world (who are there) on the nights of great fancy balls.

The glittering dress of the gentlemen, who, debarred from their much-loved black coats, break suddenly into splendour, compressing into one night, as it were, the finery of a lifetime; the marvellous fancies of ladies, who we must now suppose to adopt the style they conceive most charming and most becoming to them, and who make strange blunders sometimes, as people will do always in judging of their own forte; the dresses of ages past, and the dresses that are based only upon some poet's fancy, or on the shining wonders of some fancy ball; the heroes who don't look heroic; the famed beauties who don't look beautiful; the whole thing is a delusion, a burlesque of life and history.

And yet never was there a scene where so many elements joined in adding each their tribute of beauty to the whole. People must be good actors to sustain a historical character; they must possess the features to picture some far-famed beauty. So far, no doubt, they often fail; but the wonder to me and to many, in seeing the throng sweep by, has been to see how very few have not possessed some beauty, some grace or charm of some kind.

Amidst the gayness and brightness, each shared in the whole effect. The scene was a vast moving parterre, and who should call one flower plain?

Of late, too, our liberal fashions have been apt to gather up the pretty things of all times—the open flowing dresses; the long sweeping

trains; the high-heeled rosetted shoes; the large and feathery fans; the open, soft, hanging sleeves; the knots of the gayest ribbons. In every age almost we recognize something that we have stolen, and that we now call ours, and with each year apparently more items are adopted.

A few years ago, it is said any accidental revival of the old-fashioned powdered hair was thought supremely becoming; now it is rather remarkable how little this is noticed. It strikes me that the real secret was less in the white powder than in the brushed-off hair, exposing the white forehead, and softening the face wonderfully, as the hair that was raised so lightly fell back in the long *repentir*, or rolled lightly away backwards to be confined with combs. It was the halo of hair that was beautiful, and not the whitewash of powder. The hair, as we see it now, may be as becoming as ever, but now it is very usual to hear abuse of the plastered whiteness. If women *will* wear powder, besides the glittering gold dust that shines in its own coloured tresses, let them at least resolve to merely powder, literally, just in the turned-off hair; then, indeed, it may soften without impairing beauty.

How strange a mistake it is when the beautiful soft white hair, which is one of the charms of age, is dismissed for some darker shade that harmonized doubtless well with some bright young colouring, but which now fails to suit the beautiful soft clear look that the smooth white hair becomes so much always in English faces, with the bright complexion and pretty colour that clings to them in age. Here we see young faces seeking the added charm that they find in white powdered tresses, because of that very softening, and there we see braids and curls that now only harden the face they pretend to shade.

The soft clouds of tulle that are so much worn by every one, falling back from the head and almost



Drawing by Adolphe Clément.

A MODERN MASQUERADE.

## NOTES ON DRESS AT A FANCY BALL.

MANY have been the comparisons by which the fashions of our day has been judged. Many have been the arguments for its beauty or for its ugliness. The magnificently dressed with the becoming taste of the ladies, and the bright plain coats and gowns of the gentlemen, all have been discussed, but not often, I suppose, has been a full and fair review of the other side of the question. It is well to consider the various sides.

The principal item of the present fashions is the white hair, which seems to have come suddenly into vogue, as if from the mouth of a lifetime; the marvellous fancies of ladies, who we must now suppose to adopt the style they conceive most charming and most becoming to them, and who make strange blunders sometimes, as people will do always in judging of their own forte; the dresses of ages past, and the dresses that are based only upon some past's fancy, or on the shining wonders of some fancy ball; the heroes who don't look heroic; the famed beauties who don't look beautiful; the whole thing is a delusion, a bewilderment of the wise.

Does not the white hair, which is now the fashion, add to the beauty of the whole? People used to be good actors by nature or by education, and used possess the features to picture some far-distant beauty. So far, no doubt, they often fail; but the wonder to me and to many, in seeing the throng sweep by, has been to see how very few have not possessed some beauty, some grace or charm of some kind.

Amidst the gayness and brightness, each shared in the whole effect. The scene was a vast moving parterre, and who should call me flower plain?

Of late, too, our liberal fashions have been apt to gather up the pretty things of all times—the open flowing dresses; the long sweeping

trains; the high-heeled rosetted shoes; the large and feathered fans; the open, soft, hanging sleeves; the knots of the gayest ribbons. In every age almost we recognize something that we have stolen, and that we now call ours, and with each year apparently more items are adopted.

A few years ago, it is said any accidental revival of the old-fashioned powdered hair was thought supremely becoming; now it is otherwise. I have remarked how little this is noticed. It strikes me that the real secret was less in the white powder than in the brushed-off hair, leaving the white forehead, and softening the face wonderfully, as the hair hair was raised so lightly fell back in the new manner, or rolled lightly away before it to be confined with combs. It was the hair of hair that was beautiful, and not the whitewash of powder. The hair, as we see it now, may be as becoming as ever, but now it is very usual to hear abuse of the plastered whiteness. If women will wear powder, besides the glittering gold dust that shines in its own coloured tresses, let them at least resolve to smear powder, literally, just in the forecastle of hair, there. Indeed, it is a most absurd appearing quality.

Now, just to conclude it is when the beautiful soft white hair, which is one of the charms of age, is dismissed for some darker shade that harmonized doubtless well with some bright young colouring, but which now fails to suit the beautiful soft clear look that the smooth white hair becomes so much always in English faces, with the bright complexion and pretty colour that clings to them in age. Here we see young faces seeking the added charm that they find in white powdered tresses, because of that very softening, and there we see braids and curls that now only harden the face they pretend to shade.

The soft clouds of tulle that are so much worn by every one, falling back from the head and almost



Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.

A MODERN MASQUERADE

and when he was made of clay  
a second time had been gathered  
and mixed with the first so that  
as well as the first as the second  
it looked not at first as though  
any difference existed between them  
but when it was taken up  
the second time it had a  
slighter texture and a more  
uniform density than the first  
and when it was again  
placed upon the ground it  
was seen to have lost its  
original form.

the first part of the  
text, which is the  
same as the first part of the  
text, and the second part of the  
text, which is the same as the  
second part of the  
text.

and most all small species  
of birds occur in  
well fed condition as do the  
grubworms of the field when  
in the ground or more likely when  
gathered and set out by man. The  
adults of the various species of  
grubworms which are found in the  
soil with the plants usually have  
been the larvae of grasshoppers.  
In fact about half of the adult  
grasshoppers are found above  
the ground among plants of all kinds  
and most of them probably  
will be destroyed from time to time  
by insects like hawks, the acci-  
dental as well as the  
natural.

of the powers that were held by the  
villages, towns, districts.

sweeping to the floor, are perhaps the prettiest fancy that must become a part of daily dress before long. Gaining ground so fast in Paris as this fashion is said to be doing, it must, for its very prettiness, become more and more universal: the white and the black veils equally becoming their various wearers until we recall the old legend which points to the veil of moss as the last best gift to the rose.

Two things are very evident to all in such scenes as these. How very much easier it is to represent an idea than a character, and how very much more telling in form than colour in dress. The most brilliant combinations were merely grotesque without it, and the darkest and saddest tints possessing it were graceful.

Here we have the denizens of the celestial empire, all in their gold and satin, made in most barbarous shape, and there we have Turkish doctors and Neapolitan sailors, and there are Arab chieftains, and Greeks in their national dress, and there are native Indians all covered with shawls and jewels. In all these many differences, all so un-English and all unfamiliar, the meed of admiration always follows the flowing forms.

The women, too, must be criticized. It is a singular fact how many adhere to crinoline, declining, for one night even, to forego its services. Perhaps that was one reason why the ideal dresses have lately become so numerous. Many there were still dressed exactly as China shepherdesses, their blue and pink satin petticoats being festooned with roses, with little high-heeled boots, and silver crooks laced with flowers. Some are the Watteau groups, others are Dresden figures. Their hair is rolled back and powdered, and their faces are patched and rouged, and they are, in fact, got up to be perfect walking pictures.

The French court is also popular, and Louis Quinze and Seize might quickly have formed a court amongst the many who seemed to have now stepped down from the frames in which they had abided patiently in their court costumes for so long. It is not, however, always that grace will accompany dress; and it really

is quite refreshing to turn to the water spirits and their companion elements, and to find in ideals and seasons some relief to our wearied minds—wearied to the last degree by the procession of past ages winding by.

This class is most often very taking. There is a breadth and license that admits of imagination. First, as we sat and watched, dark Night trailed by, with her stars, and the moon on her head, and the owl, and after her came silently the softly-falling Snowdrifts. The snowdrifts were perhaps amongst the things that were best represented. The long and flowing white draperies and the veil that swept on the ground, with its soft-falling flakes of the purest swansdown; the icicles that glittered and sparkled above the snow, sometimes on the holly-sprays that hungry robins pecked at; the atmosphere of haze—you felt cold when they drifted past you. Here is the Morning breaking, with its faint tinge of rose light, and with the flickering star that goes out before the sun.

Here is the Evening grey, with the dusky dim robes of twilight, and with its star, too, glittering the brighter as night draws near. There has been Starlight night, and here comes the deep Midnight, folds upon folds of blackness, and scarce a star appearing. One wonders how such deep black can yet look so unsubstantial: it is the deep darkness which is still to us intangible. But both in the snow and the darkness the multifarious folds of the soft cloudy tulle seem to heap up with natural lightness the real thing that they represent. There is in both of these a true atmospheric influence.

One does not see why 'Air' should be harder to represent. Perhaps, unless we took fog, we can't see the original, and therefore one is puzzled to carry out quite the ideal. To represent air properly I suppose one should be invisible, which seems to me to involve insuperable difficulty. Fire may be very pretty, only I cannot see why people should wear red satin or embroider the flames on black. Surely a cloudy white dress with golden flames play-

ing over it and fastening in the hair, would be a great deal prettier and much more like the element. The only thing against fire is, that it is so often a painful representation to some people who may see it.

The list of unrealities is growing very long, but one cannot pass by silently the Morning Star that shines on us, with pale golden hair unbound, and floating away as the clouds, and with a mist of tulle, over which it shines and sparkles. This is so very pretty for people with pale gold hair. Then there is Flora, too, with her robe all bestrown with flowers—with flowers that drop from her hair, and that hang on her in bright masses.

Spring, too, is flitting towards us with her dress of pale primrose hue and with her nestling violets and her tufts of snowdrops springing. Certainly these ideals are very pretty indeed. They cannot be called to account for all their pretty fancies; they have a little rule and a very great deal of licence. But if such fêtes as these have thrown open the golden gates and let in a throng of fairies and such unsubstantial sprites—if they have given reins to fancy and permitted aerial flights—so do they also permit us to visit a lower sphere. Already abroad we hear of many an odd device. A bat here flies by night, flapping its wings that glitter with the diamond dewdrops that fall from the eaves of the thatch as it passes. Here we see the well-known ‘white cat’ and her blue collar names her Minette. What a soft, pleasant dress to wear that snowy white fur must be! Birds fly about here and there—and here is a cock with red spurs. When animals once come in fashion one never knows what to expect. One has heard already of lizards that glittered in green and gold, and a swarm of brown bees in Paris have welcomed the imperial party, stepping from their straw hives that flew open at a touch, and forming themselves in lines through which the Empress passed.

Butterflies have been personified—no sarcasm being intended—and very graceful insects one can guess that they were in Paris.

But no matter what the dress may be, the great thing to each wearer is, doubtless, its becomingness, its prettiness, and its gracefulness, and its ease to wear in itself. And though it may be said that some people suffer willingly in ‘so good a cause’ as dress, yet let no one make light of the intimate connection that there is between ease and grace. It seems to run through everything. A woman, dress-imprisoned, can never look at her ease—a bonnet, or a head-dress, or a comb that wearyes one—a band of elastic, perhaps, that secures some veil or wreath—a dress that constrains the figure—a mantle or gown too heavy, clothes that are not warm enough, or things, again, that are too warm. How can one think of good dressing in connection with any of these? The acmé of good dressing would seem to be supremely in perfect suitability; each thing should seem the only thing one could wear in such circumstances. Colour, again, is a thing so often considered *alone*. One buys what looks charming on others, and never does the thought cross us that we may be so different—that what looks well on one may look just as ill on another.

Nothing is more amusing than to see ten blonde women rushing to get some lovely new colour that suits some dark friend of theirs marvellously—and perhaps our most usual practice is equally ridiculous—when every one copies the Empress in everything but her beauty. Not only in becomingness, but also in general harmony, people must consider not only what they are, but also every item of which they compose a toilette. Every one knows how completely wrong gloves can spoil a whole dress—say dark-green, for instance, when the tone of the dress is warm—that is, of course, an example taken from morning dress; but if people will not think of colour then they are not at all more likely to manage it well in the evening, when, though under more control, it is by no means uniformly brought into proper keeping.

Now Scotch dresses, as a rule, are

a warning at fancy balls. You see a great deal of colour, but there is nothing telling. A red, or a blue or green scarf and things in the hair to suit it, would be at least distinct and bright upon the white dress. The misfortune here is generally that there is no mass of colour sufficient to hold its own amidst the great mass of dead white. The green is broken by red, and the red is made dim by green, and a general dislocation is apparent about it all.

Amidst so much colour and so much intention, unless you represent something you should represent some one, or else be content and happy as a nineteenth century lady; and many indeed are the votes that proclaim their dress after all the prettiest of the throng. They are so wide and trailing, so soft in their silky folds, the flowers lie on them so lightly, and the long veils break them so gracefully. Great scope is given, however, to personify favourite characters. Sometimes Amy Robart passes, and there Ellen Douglas glides; Dolly Varden meets us; one expects to see Becky Sharp. Undine is scarce a character; but seeing so invariably Rebecca and Rowena, Minna and Brenda appearing, one wonders why Walter Scott should be always so very popular.

Madame de Pompadour, too, and many French notorieties; Polish and Russian ladies, and here and there fair Circassians. Even a Moorish princess is well received in Paris.

The costumes of countries are, perhaps, the worst things to carry out. A neat English servant's dress is certainly very pretty; it is so extremely suitable and appropriate to her place; but I never can see the benefit of ladies adopting a peasant's dress. The short striped Swiss petticoats, with their laced velvet bodies; the dress of the Roman contadinas or of the French grisettes—the tall caps of Norman bonnes—the expansive white wings of the Flemings. It seems quite unaccountable why putting silk for calico should make peasants' dresses suitable for ladies, and to me it seems

always that ladies are not at home in them.

Amongst the grotesque figures that will cross one's path in such scenes there is that Quasimodo, deformed and hideous-looking, with long caroty locks of hair and a horrible skip when he walks. Faust and Mephistopheles don't often look half diabolical. It is a great misfortune that flame-coloured garments won't make them so. But the best representation of their kind in the present day would be clothed in such oily sanctity or in such very jaunty, and in such liberal guise, that no one would dream of the meaning, and would think only of dear friends.

Women generally do not go in for dressing as 'hideous.' The lady who was Photography, at least only hid her charms under the towery walls of her singular attire. Very few indeed will make themselves purposely frightful.

And I think there should be a law for all against intentional ugliness. There are enough and to spare of ungraceful things in the world, and to multiply fair things seems to be, of the two, so much more laudable.

The gentlemen, it must be owned, will shelter themselves behind precedents. One rarely sees them devise new characters as women do. Women do, doubtless, now and then appear as Queen Elizabeth, or, boldly, as Mary Stuart; but men have, without exception, some guide to fall back upon. And this it is in a great measure that gives such an air of history to the scene. The Crusaders are hero with their cross, and the Templars with long white cloaks, and Knights of Malta pass by in black velvet dress, with their diamonds shining, and their irreproachable boots. Among the most picturesque dresses the University robes are seen here and there—suitable or not suitable—at least the one sole vestige we keep of antique beauty, probably the one dress that would not disgrace an old statue.

Here we see Garibaldi, and there Neapolitan sailors. Charles the Second in his plumed hat, and

Henry the Eighth with his cloak and his gay embroideries, and his hat with its ostrich plumes.

Here is Sir Walter Raleigh, tall, and dark, and grave; there a Spanish hidalgo all covered with small black tassels.

French kings and English nobles, the heroes of romance everywhere: with my Lord of Leicester the Chancellor Clarendon passes; Sir Thomas More walks with King Henry, and perhaps Captain Macbeth joins them. No novel is safe from pillage, its characters step out of it; no picture may rest in its frame, it walks out as the Huguenots.

The shining of rich embroidery and the glow of bright-coloured velvets; the glittering sword-hilts and the waving plumes, all make up a wonderful picture of the life of all time before us. The uniforms of all nations are to be seen around us; only the sombre black coats have mostly withdrawn their gloominess, where men in court suits are rustling and men in chain armour stalking by. Except the close-fitting black suits, with mantles that fall from the shoulders, and the robes that give Roman dignity, and the rare handsome uniforms, there can be little question as to the dress that is most *distingué*, that which would with most difficulty be worn by one not a gentleman. For let me remark, *en passant*, fine feathers don't make fine birds; to put on a very fine dress is a trying thing for some people. But one cannot see the long waistcoats covered with fine embroidery, the delicate lace cuffs, and the long cravats falling down, the delicate light velvet coats that suit so well with the powdered hair, the silk stockings and diamond buckles that glitter upon the shoes; one really cannot see the refined look of the seventeenth century without lamenting very much that its nearest trace is now only seen in liveries.

All honour to fancy balls, which ventilate dress theories, and give us an opportunity of judging the

dress of one century by that of ten others so readily! But amidst all the knights of old, and amidst the Crusaders' armour, and amidst the many uniforms of red and blue that passed by—amongst all the glittering throng which ornaments shone brightest? Here and there was a quiet figure that passed by in the crowd unconsciously, yet after whom many eyes turned. One was a mere boy, the battle of life, one would have said, had yet to begin for him; but there was an expression of power reserved in that face still, which well might make one think he would bear himself bravely when it came. There was not, perhaps, that eager look of almost boyish daring; there was an unboyish calmness that seemed more to belong to a man. And if the knights of old were men with their gilded spurs, then, indeed, age was not like to be counted by years for him: for on the slight young form there were clasped medals glittering, and brightly amidst the medals shone that one insignia that tells so proudly always of deeds of most daring bravery, the honour that is bestowed upon 'the bravest brave'—the Victoria Cross, which all our brave men prize.

Why are the most brave so calm-looking? Is it that they have not need to be excited? Is it a sound feeling and consciousness of thought? There is surely a great deal hidden in that sustained effortless strength. There must underlie it no little force of will—no slight or untried endurance, a great deal of unself-consciousness. Brave men are not rare in England, and Victoria Crosses are many; but in an unreal scene, amidst so many great shades, there is something that bears one forcibly back to far different days, to the fields where those crosses were won, and across the bright lighted halls the smoke and the flash seem to pass, and with the soft-sounding valve the bray of the trumpet mingles, and the sound of the dancing feet seems to echo the measured tramp.

## HOW SOME FOLK PREPARE FOR 'THE DERBY.'



I HAD frequently read of 'Show-folks' in general. In particular, had Mr. Charles Dickens, by lifting the curtain that had hitherto concealed from public notice the characters of Messrs. Codlin and Short, shown me the ins and outs in the lives of the Punch-and-Judy men. Moreover, he it was who had introduced me to Grinder's lot—to Jerry, the manager of the dancing dogs—to Vuffin, the proprietor of the weak-kneed giant and the little lady without arms and legs—to Sweet William, the ugly conjuror, who swallowed leaden lozenges through the medium of his eyes, and balanced donkeys in his dreams—and, above all, to the genuine and only Jarley, the delight of the nobility and gentry, and the patronized of royalty. Mr. Albert Smith, too, had depicted Hickory and Luddy with so much ability that I could at once accept his sketches for the graphic portraits of living realities. But no one had yet painted for me

a domestic picture of the swinging boat people, the proprietors of the roundabouts, merry-go-rounds, and ups-and-downs; and my curiosity had often been excited to know what became of these persons when the turmoil and riot of race and fair were over.

They have not been mentioned by Mr. Henry Mayhew in his great literary torso of 'London Labour and the London Poor,' although, in that extraordinary book, he has given us many interesting particulars of people who obtain their livelihood by very strange ways and means; but the subject would present good material for one who has dressed up the dry bones of statistics with so much novelty and effect. For these swinging-boat people are the possessors of much valuable property, and must form a large community; and as the specialities of their profession only demand their existence for six months of the year, the question naturally arises,—What

do they do with themselves during the other six months? In spring they make their appearance with the swallows and the pear-blossoms, and lead a gipsy life until 'the swallows fly towards home,' and the pear-blossoms have ripened into fruit. But how, when, and where do they pass that intermediate wintry stage of their existence between the pear fruit and the pear-blossom?

Chance has put me in possession of some of the particulars of which I was in quest.

It was the last week in April, and I was passing through a certain rural parish in the south-western corner of Staffordshire. It was in the very heart of an agricultural district, where a stranger would have had to wait till nightfall to see the red glare in the heavens before he could fully have realized the fact that he was but five or six miles from the skirts of 'the Black Country.' For this particular parish looked anything but 'black'; and, if it was not green—save where the meadow land and the spring wheat made emerald patches in the brown and ruddy landscape, yet it gave manifold manifestations that it soon would be. The plentiful hedge-row timber, the trees dotted over many of the fields, the coppices, plantations, and woods were bursting into leaf, and presented that hazy appearance which is a characteristic of the oncoming foliage. The larch, 'the lady of the woods,' had been the first to put on her light spring dress; and the chestnuts already made a gallant show, the unfolding fans of their leaves hanging much in the same form that dress pocket-handkerchiefs assume when they dangle from the left hands of ball-room young ladies. A snowy bloom thickly covered the pear and plum and cherry trees; and the black-thorn in the hedge showed its white blossoms among the catkins of the willows. The banks were profusely strewn with wild flowers—'clotted with them,' as an old cottager very expressively said to me. Primroses, violets, daisies, anemones, golden celandines—all these gleaming jewels of Nature were there; in the broad meadows the cowslips were putting

forth their speckled buds; blazing king-cups fringed the brook-side, with the paler

*'Daffodil,  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty.'*

while higher up, on the outskirks of the wood, the prickly gorse-bushes were covered with a wealth of glorious golden blossoms.

Overhead, the first swallows were skimming in their rapid flight, and unseen larks were singing 'a mile in air.' Birds were twittering and flitting on all sides; while ever and anon came the hoarse double 'cock-cock' crow of the pheasant, the shrill scream of the partridge, the soothng note of the wood-pigeon, and the plaintive cry of the lapwing, which, to most ears, says 'Fee-weet!' but which proclaims itself to many a rustic as a bird 'be-witched.' In the fields, 'the merry brown hares were leaping,' colts were caracolling by their mothers' sides, and lambs were bounding, 'as to the tabor's sound,' with those dervish leaps and insane pirouettes that constitute so large a portion of their enjoyment. Old Mother Goose was tenderly leading forth her young family of 'gulls' (looking for all the world like little bundles of flannel), their attentive papa strutting by the side of his helpmate with an air of stupid gallantry, now fiercely stabbing the sweet grass with his orange bill, and now giving a hs-selk! as a note of encouragement to his wife and children, and a warning to pigs and other farm-yard marauders that he had his eyes wide open, his courage up, and his bill ready. Mrs. Duck, the 'notorious glutton' of the libellous legend, was imitating the example of her anserine relative, and was also walking at the head of a small procession of ducklings; and motherly hens were scratching the dust, and enticing their chirping children around them with invitational chucks. Here, there, and everywhere, the bird-boys, with screams and clappers, were driving the rooks from the young corn.

Walking amid these sights and sounds of spring-time in the country, in the rustic retirement of this sequestered spot, I suddenly, and to

my great surprise, stumbled upon a scene that I should least of all have expected to find in such a place—a scene, the concomitants of which suggested shouting, and crowding, and riot, and other sights and sounds altogether incongruous to those which were then present to my senses. At the bottom of a sandy lane was a long, low, and irregularly-built cottage, its roof yellow and grey with moss and lichen, and here and there decorated with a coronal of fern. There were many out-buildings, with a picturesque well, and an unpicturesque pig, who had his snout buried in the empty well-bucket, in the vain expectation of wash. Passing by the gable of the building my thoughts were rudely roused from their quiet spring doze by a discordant clatter of voices. In an open yard by the side of the cottage, with blossoming orchard trees all around, was a medley and novel group. I had lighted upon the home of a swinging-boat proprietor, who was surrounded by the gorgeous works of art that formed the staple machinery of his profession, and was placidly smoking the pipe of contentment, the while he administered a coat of varnish to a highly-emblazoned but tailless hobby-horse. A second similar horse stood by, and a third was being carried off to a tent, where eleven horses (of the same rare breed) were drawn up in two lines, nose to nose, staring and snorting at each other, with distended eyes and nostrils, in a manner suggestive of high breeding and corn. All these hobby-horses were excellently carved in wood, and were represented with superabundant action; one or two of them, indeed, might have been modelled from 'an irreclaimable savage' of Mr. Rarey. They were bigger than Shetland ponies; they had glossy coats—of paint and varnish; they were caparisoned (by the brush) in a style that was both new and gorgeous; they were of various hues—black, brown, white, grey, roan, chestnut, cream, spotted, piebald; and they were decorated with scrolls, on which their names were emblazoned in gold and

colours—Prince Albert, Prince of Wales, Wellington, Snowball, Rosebud, King Tom, Gay Lad, Black Bess, Wild Rose, Water Lily, Bo-Peep, Red Deer, Moss Rose, and True Boy. They were destitute of tails and bridles, which were moveables, and reserved for the eyes of the public; but their manes were painted, and their leather saddles were fixtures, being securely nailed to their places, thus doing away with the necessity of girths, and precluding the possibility of an accident arising from the saddle 'turning.' Every steed stood upon a wooden platform painted a verdant green.

It was certainly a strange and unexpected sight; and the last thing that one would have expected to see in such an out-of-the-way country nook, were these fourteen hobby-horses, so gorgeously caparisoned, but as tailless as Manx cats, ranged head to head in a pillared tent, which, so far as colour went, was as highly decorated as the Mediæval Court in the Crystal Palace. Nor were the other *agréments* of the scene less ornate or remarkable. Poles, beams, planks, and ladders were scattered on all sides, bright with all (and more than all) the colours of the rainbow, and adorned with marvellous devices that might have been designed by Mr. Owen Jones while suffering from dyspeptic nightmare. Some of the larger portions of the machinery were conspicuously marked with the magic words 'FROM LONDON,' which, in one sense of the word, was certainly true, for poles, and horses, and 'boats' were made there. The swinging-boats, of which but three were visible, the others being stored at the back of the cottage, were also remarkable for conflicting colours and striking devices. The largest of the three displayed, on either side, a bewitching portrait of 'Fair Flora,' scattering flowers, and surrounded by emblems of peace; while, by way of contrast, the under portion of the boat was covered with scenes of battle, and fire, and smoke, the 'Charge of the Six Hundred,' and other stirring scenes from the Cri-

men, which should be seen and studied by connoisseurs in the crowd beneath, the while the boat with its sickening (is this the reason why it is called a 'boat?') and shouting crew rose high in the air, and made its thirty revolutions for a ha'penny.

Visible to the naked eye, while others unseen were audible to the listening ear, were five children, the property of more than one mother, who were by no means so gorgeously attired, or had such clean and shining faces as the painted hobby-horses. Two of these olive branches were at play in the Crimean boat, the one switching a motherly hen, the other assuaging its tender griefs by the rattle of peas enshrined in a wicker toy, the while it spasmodically hooted, and kicked, and gazed fixedly at nothing, after the manner of infants. A third urchin was swaying himself on a pole, watching the varnishing process, and meditating, it may be, on forthcoming races, when he would stand on his head and turn 'cart-wheels' for the amusement of the gentlefolk in the carriages, and for the extortion of coppers, and fragments of pigeon-pie and pickled salmon. A fourth child was hugging a very blackguard of a dog, who nevertheless received the rough caresses with gentlemanly composure. The fifth youngster was endeavouring to precipitate itself from the door-step, but was restrained from the rash act by its mamma, an exceedingly well favoured and buxom young lady, who, notwithstanding her evident youth, wore a wedding-ring, and was the mother of the child beside her, as well as of the dog caresser. This young lady's head was adorned with plentiful black hair, which (shortly afterwards) she artlessly let down—like the lady of the labels on Rowland's Macassar—then made it glossy with the aid of water and the palms of her hands, and then twisted it up again to its normal fashion, the while she held the comb in her mouth.

This chequered scene of dirty live bipeds and cleanly-painted carved quadrupeds was closely

backed by an orchard thick with apple and plum trees, and here and there between their trunks I could see a richly-wooded landscape, with many agricultural signs of spring in the country. The prospect in the immediate foreground was also a symptom of spring; for it betokened the busy preparations of the swinging-boat proprietor for his annual tour to the wakes, fairs, and races of the midland counties. He was now hard at work on the finishing touches; and, within three days after, hobby-horses, swinging-boats, and all the paraphernalia of the 'roundabouts' would be carried off on vans and light waggons to the initiatory scene of the summer campaign. The house was so situated that it lay within easy reach of a populous district, where races, and fairs, and wakes were as frequent as plums in a Christmas pudding. To these he travelled by devious lanes and roundabout roads, in order to escape the turnpikes; and, being well up in the intricate geography of the country, rarely troubled the toll-collector.

This swinging-boat proprietor has, by his own (what shall I say? well, 'not to put too fine a point upon it,') talent and industry, accumulated something like an independence, and is a man of property, for he owns his own and the adjoining cottage, the garden, the orchard, and nine acres of land. He farms his land, and sells the produce of his orchard. He also buys fruit on speculation, or sells it on commission; moreover, he 'does a little butchering,' especially when any sheep or cow has come to a natural end; and he 'deals' in poultry. The cost of his stock in trade must be considerable. I had some talk with him on this subject, the while he graciously permitted me to make a sketch of himself and his quadrupeds; 'for I don't mind being put in a book,' he said, with a hazy idea as to the destination of my drawing; 'I'm a public character, and well known to most folks.'

'Them fourteen 'osses,' he said, 'was all made up in Lunnon, and cost me a hundred and twenty pound, not one penny less if you'll

believe me; and ready money, too. And that was when they was in the rough, you must remember, and afore they was smoothed down and painted. And then, as regards the painting of 'em, sir; I was obligated to employ a first-class man; and he sleep' here till he'd done his job; and I had to give him thirty shillings a week, and his *maintainance*.'

I inwardly remarked to myself, that if my friend had been the rector of the parish, he would have kept his curate at a less expense.

'And you must remember, sir,' continued the swinging-boat proprietor, 'that I only paid him for his hart: I had to find all the paint and gilding myself. You'll please to notice, sir, that there's a main o' gold-leaf and silver-leaf laid all about them 'osses; likewise on the boats and poles; and that vermillion paint is dreadful expensive, and we are obligated to use it more than other colour. The hemerald green also comes heavy. And them Crimean battles weren't painted for nothing; though I saved a matter of a pound a boat by having more smoke put into them. It makes 'em look more like real battles—not that I ever seed one, but one fancies there must be a deal of smoke and pother—and it saves the expense of painting in the red coats. By the end of a season they always want fresh painting, leastways a deal of touching up. The boys and girls kicks the paint off 'em dreadful; though the men and women are almost worse than the boys and girls.'

'What! do men and women often ride on them?' I asked.

'Law bless you, sir, I couldn't have afforded these hoses, if they didn't!' replied the swinging-boat proprietor. 'Why, let alone the races, you just look at the wakes and fairs; and specially at the mops! Why, at them Michaelmas hirings you'll see all the lasses and men as come to be hired, 'll spend almost as much with me as they do in the public-houses. Why, they're never tired of riding them 'osses, sir! The lasses 'll sit on the pommels, and make believe as they were fine ladies; and the men mostly keeps

up the game by pretending to be smart fox-unters. Oh yes! I've plenty of grown-up folks; and of gentlefolks too, for the matter of that—specially at races. Why, at last — races, the On'rable — and a lot of his quality friends, when they got tired of Aunt Sally and the sticks, they all came and had a turn on them 'osses. But they're all alike—poor folk and quality folk; they kicks the paint off dreadful.'

While (to myself) I was deducing an obvious moral from this truism, the swinging-boat proprietor was varnishing his tailless steeds, and dealing out fragments of information from the storehouse of his experience. It appeared that the saddles, although nailed on, became frayed and worn, and had to be renewed about every other year: that the bridles were not fit to be seen at the end of the season; and, above all that new tails had to be provided annually. On inquiry, I learnt that the usual custom of an equestrian, or equestrienne, at these 'merry-go-rounds,' or 'roundabouts,' was to hold on by the bridle, neck, or pommeil with the one hand, and, with the other, to grip the tail. In the excitement of the moment, or, in order to avoid being flung off at a tangent as the machine was whirled rapidly round, a handful of horse-hair was frequently extracted from the hobby-horse's tail; the consequence was, that, at the termination of the season, the portly bang-tail had usually dwindled to a thin rat-tail, and the steed that had started on his professional tour with so much paint and horse-hair, came home again with grievous sores and raws as to paint, and sadly moulted as regards horse-hair. No wonder, then, that, with all these expensive items fresh in his memory, my friend should tell me 'them 'osses cost a sight more than live 'uns.'

But if the cost of the apparatus be great, the gains must also be considerable. At one fair, and that a small one, and unknown to fame—'but a merry good pitch,' said my friend—this man, after paying all his expenses, cleared (according to his own account) thirty-five pounds.

*Ex pede Herculem!* If this one day's gain is to be accepted as a criterion of the other days in his professional career, there are undoubtedly many

less profitable occupations than that of a swinging-boat proprietor. I should like to see his income-tax return! CUTHBERT BEDE.

#### A BUNDLE OF ANSWERS TO A BUNDLE OF CONTRADICTIONS

'TIS paper solves these contradictions,  
And proves, though strange, they are no fictions.

There's paper short, and paper long,  
Paper thin, and paper strong,  
Paper brown, and blue, and white,  
And on the blue you 'Smiles' may write,  
Paper heavy, paper light;

One sheet may scarce outweigh a feather:  
'Tis weighed by tons when piled together.

You surely need not to be told  
There's paper new and paper old.

Where you a double letter see,  
Without, within, must paper be.  
Each page of paper that you view,  
Has got a head as well as you,  
Though hair upon it never grew;  
While underneath a foot is seen,  
On which no toes have ever been.  
Yet, without limb, or heel, or toe,  
Where'er 'tis sent may paper go.

That paper without wings can fly,  
Mounting upward to the sky,  
Doubting me, believe your sight,  
Go and view a paper kite.

A paper book, *sans* voice or eyes,  
Can tell whate'er the traveller spies.

Paper, without lips or ears,  
Telling the tale it never hears,  
Can move to laughter or to tears.

The lover to his mistress writing,  
All her matchless charms reciting,  
With burning words and bursting sighs,  
Her lips, her cheeks, her brow, her eyes,  
Her graceful form, her waist so taper,  
Showing what their hue and shape are,  
His hopes and fears commits to paper.

Paper without hand to use,  
If it bear the prefix, 'News',  
Both good and evil can diffuse.

Paper thinks not, yet may shew  
All the wise can think or know.

Paper, in worth, all wealth exceeds,  
Witness bank-notes and title-deeds;  
Yet, in the mud, has many a boot  
Trod scraps of paper under foot  
Made many a thousand years before;  
It will be made for thousands more.

Then own you dull or blind must be,  
So plain an answer not to see!

C. M. Q.

## A GOSSIP ON GARDEN GAMES.

## CHAPTER I.

## QUOITS.

WHAT can I do with this bit of land?" The gentleman who put this question to me surveyed the said 'bit of land' with a look of dudgeon. To be candid, it was not much to look at, and the speaker was fresh from the bowery orchards and green slopes of woody Warwickshire. Upon his removal to the metropolis he had applied to me to recommend a nice quiet locality, where he would be too far removed from Fleet Street to hear the roar of the wheels, too far from the river to have the worst of the fogs, and where he might make an effort to keep up country associations. I directed him to one of my own favourite quarters, and the advice was—I mention it as a very rare circumstance—accepted. Having thus stood sponsor for the locality, I presume he considered he had a right to expect me to tell him what he might do with the little strip of land at the back of his house. I had, unfortunately, just congratulated him upon the situation. This added something to the severity of tone he adopted in putting the question.

I had called it a garden. He had laughed at the supposition. We were standing on the steps at the back of the house. Houses, and especially suburban houses, are deceptive. Their exteriors are cream-coloured, and look unconscious of the existence of common bricks—that is, at front; but go to the back, and behold what I saw, standing on my friend's steps—black, dingy bricks all round; for the back of one row of houses looks toward the back of another; and though they are smooth and respectable, like some people I know, on the outside, there is a reverse to the picture; and, as regards the houses, it would be horribly dull were it not that here and there a pretty human face or two lights up the scene from some adjacent window. Odious chimney stacks, cobwebby rain-water

butts, and that sort of thing, formed the chief features in the 'housescape' that I looked upon. The bit of land itself was broken up in every conceivable way. There was a fragment of a line-prop that had seen better days lying in one place; by the wall, in the last stage of natural decay, were some ragged, withered stalks of last year's chrysanthemums. In the centre a pond had apparently been constructed for fish acclimatization purposes, but abandoned, and partially filled up with rubbish, a passion for flowers having usurped the place of the piscicultural scheme. This, too, had evidently been of short duration, for only one third of the ground had been laid out in parterres. Some long rank grass, a piece of clothes-line, full of knots, fragments of broken crockery, and bits of toys from which the rain had washed the paint, were strewn about the *bit of land*. What could he do with it? I playfully suggested that he should make of the wilderness a miniature Chatsworth, pointing out the advantage of the already made pond for the site of the fountain, and how he should make the flower-beds, lay out the kitchen garden, and build beautiful grottoes.

The reader will have been all this time wondering what this can have to do with a chapter on an ancient English game which does not appear to be intimately connected with a modern garden at the back of a London house. I hope, however, to show him that the two things may be connected with much profit and pleasure. By turning the little strip of land, 27 yards by 8, into a quoit-ground my friend has succeeded in making it of great use. Most suburban houses have such a strip of land, in most cases lying waste, or growing a few flowers, or doing duty as a play-place for the children. Without interfering with the flowers, either human or botanical, to any great extent, gentlemen

may find in such a garden room for a very interesting classical game, which calls for the exercise of considerable skill. The game is quoits. The dimensions will be ample, and the game is charming. Any reader of this is at liberty to adopt the suggestion, and return me a letter of thanks through the editor. That he may the better be able to do so, I shall proceed to describe how the ground is made—I mean a good ground, on which it will be pleasant to play; for it is quite possible to play quoits without taking any preliminary trouble in preparing it.

Having furnished my friend quite unexpectedly with a satisfactory answer to his question, he set about reducing the wilderness to some sort of order. Then he made two 'ends,' eighteen yards apart in a direct line. Twelve inches of soil having been removed for a circle of one yard from the pin, a layer of fine ashes was put in, and then a brickmaker—in suburban regions how plentiful they are, hanging, as it were, upon the skirts of civilization—was taken into confidence and set to work. He filled it up with the finest clay procurable, treading it in, and raising it slightly above the level of the ground, with an incline of three or four inches toward the back. The two 'ends' having been made, and scattered over with sawdust, turf was laid down, flower-beds planned by the side of the walks, and in the space between the two ends; the only prohibition required is that there shall be no shrub in the line of sight between the stakes.

The modern system of quoit-playing is infinitely superior to that adopted by the Greeks and Romans (it was one of the five classical games) or in remote times among the Britons. They used a large circular piece of iron, which was solid; and their object was to throw it as far as possible. We have applied science to this, as to all our games, and it is no longer a mere test of strength, but one of skill, requiring accurate judgment, and a perfect control of the muscles of the arm. As an exercise it has but one defect: that is, its one-sidedness;

all the education, muscularly speaking, is imparted to one arm—the right. This is, physically, as injurious as it would be, intellectually, to cram a child with geography, and leave all other knowledge to take its chance. It is the same with all kinds of bowling, with fencing, and with single-stick. The right arm does all the work, and the left languishes for want of use. Setting this on one side, it is a capital exercise, and a splendid chest expander, without being too exhaustive: it is, in fact, just the game for a garden during half an hour of leisure.

Our plan being to throw at a mark, a ground of unlimited length is not required. It is frequently played at various distances. Fifteen yards is the minimum, and thirty yards the maximum length. Eighteen yards is the most pleasant distance at which to throw; or, if a very light quoit is used, the distance may be increased to twenty-one. Such a ground as that is accessible to hundreds of London men whose occupations make it very desirable, and whose tastes lead them to desire an agreeable out-door recreation. This is just adapted to supply the hiatus. Only two players are required, no preparation, and almost as little paraphernalia. A couple of pairs of quoits, two players—father and son, or brother and brother—of about equal skill, a pleasant spring day, and good-bye to dull care! For what other game can I say as much? Croquet is very 'slow' when but two players are engaged in it, cricket impossible, football out of the question, and bowls rather tedious—unless it is bowling at the Jack, which demands a much larger ground. Quoits has none of these defects. It is lively, too: conversation, cigars, and jokes are quite compatible with it. Accidents are well-nigh impossible: they can only result from great carelessness. I have known the ladies busy about the flower-beds while the gentlemen have been throwing the quoits many a pleasant spring evening.

The weight and size of the quoit is a matter of individual taste. A

glance at the windows of the iron-mongers in the Strand and Oxford Street will suffice to show how great the difference is. Our primitive quoits were simply worn-out horse-shoes, and our modern disc is only a development of that. It is made sometimes of steel, sometimes of brass, but more commonly of iron. Players of equal strength will sometimes have a preference for quoits in the pair of which there is as much as three or four pounds weight difference. The north country men are great lovers of the game, and many play with a quoit which has not inaptly been called a 'young mill-wheel.' These may be suited for men who habitually harden their muscles by wrestling matches and their daily labour. I like my athletics a little diluted, and find a pair of quoits that weigh five pounds sufficiently heavy. Having once decided at what distance the stakes shall be pitched, and what weight your quoits shall be, it will be well not to 'experimentalize' with others if you wish to attain great precision. Still the best general display of skill is that made by a player who can change his quoits, and distance and still throw close to the pin.

Quoits, like anything else in these days of competitive examinations, are very beautifully made, smooth, true, and polished. They should be slightly hollow on the under side, and correspondingly concave on the upper. Thick on the inside, they taper down to a delicate edge, which is sharp. Iron ones are very objectionable, because the rust eats into them very speedily, and then they injure the finger-tips, and become disagreeable to use. If due care is taken with steel ones (but it very seldom is) they will retain their smooth surface and polish, and the pleasure of the game will be much enhanced. If the steel is of a good 'temper' it will not easily chip, and will not burr at all. With brass ones every stone struck in the descent throws up a great burr, and soon spoils them. The greatest injury to quoits occurs when one descends upon another already fast in the ground. The better the players

the more liable is this to occur, as all the quoits are grouped round the stake. If this happens near the little notch where the forefinger is placed in throwing it does very serious damage.

Having come thus far, and been absolutely practical (practical writing on pastimes is generally dull, and I am afraid this is no exceptional case), let me suppose that you and I have lit our cigars, that it is a pleasant spring afternoon, and we want an appetite for dinner. Quoits in hand, we will enter that 'bit of land' concerning which I spoke just now. The gardener has watered the clay, smoothed it down since we last played, and scattered some sawdust over the 'ends.' At the two extremities of the grass, which is bright as emerald, they look like two pats of butter nicely balanced on the edges of a green plate. In the centre of each pat, to carry on the illustration, is a thin piece of—but to tell what it is a thin piece of a closer inspection has to be made. Of one thing we can be certain, even at a distance, viz., that it is not an iron pin such as quoit-players, apparently with the sole design of spoiling their quoits, and thus making the business of manufacturing a good one, used to favour.

On a nearer scrutiny of this thin something it turns out to be an ordinary piece of electric wire encased in gutta-percha and painted bright red. It is split at the top, and a piece of cardboard is inserted. It stands about five inches out of the ground, at an angle of about 45 degrees toward the other end. We shall see the reason why it is not perpendicular when the game begins. This description of 'peg' is peculiar to my quoit-ground and those of my friends. It is the best I have ever used. The iron ones break the quoit edges; the wood ones, when struck, send a well-aimed quoit bowling away from the stake; a feather is too light, and easily displaced; but this, when struck, gives way, and recovers its position again with the most obliging promptitude and accuracy, whereas a wooden or metal peg gets dented into the

ground, and, as it must not be touched until the admeasurements have been taken, gives an advantage to the overthrows, and places the short quoits at a corresponding disadvantage. Failing this, a swan's or raven's feather is perhaps the best stake; but they have a most awkward knock—from old association, I suppose—of jumping out of the ground and trying to fly at every third or fourth throw. The guttapercha can be cut to any length, and thrust deep enough to prevent the possibility of this.

Planting the right foot by the stake, keeping it to the outside, the game begins. There is no running or walking up to the place from which the throw is made. Such a proceeding would render a true throw of very rare occurrence. The quoit is held in the right hand, balanced by the left, and raised, as a rifleman raises his rifle, until the edge just covers the tip of the stake. There is a moment's pause and poise, during which the brain and eye are carrying their commands to the muscles. Swing! The quoit is swung backward, then forward again rapidly, and there it goes on its course. Loosed when the arm was nearly horizontal, and made to spin by a twist of the wrist and the drawing away of the fingers, its flight is beautifully true. It does not describe a perfect arc. For about two-thirds the length of the ground it makes a gradual ascent, and at its highest point the height very nearly agrees with the distance: that is, in a throw of eighteen yards it is at twelve yards' distance about that height in the air, or rather less. Players differ on this point, some maintaining that the highest point in the trajectory should be at mid-distance. It is a mistake, as the commonest application of scientific principles would show. In such a throw the 'edge' is not sufficient to insure its being a 'sticker.' Its descent should be such that it will enter the ground at right angles to the two stakes and at angle of about 45 degrees. The stake is planted so as to meet this position and allow a perfectly true throw to leave the quoit a 'ringer,' which counts double.

With proper rules there is no such thing as chance in the game. Unfortunately rules of any kind are almost entirely unknown. The one or two simple ones that are needed have yet to be made. I never saw but one set in print. They were very extraordinary—especially the rule which imposed a fine of sixpence or threepence for the use, or rather *mis-use*, of certain words; and as the duty of judging of the enormity of the offence and the fine to be inflicted was to be referred to the members present at the time, the intervals between throwing might possibly have been enlivened by a spirited philological discussion. It must not be inferred from this that quoits is a game belonging to a not too respectable class of people. It has been a favourite game, at one time or another, with almost every class. At present it belongs almost exclusively to gentlemen and county matches, and great public games are very seldom heard of, though there are districts in which it is much played for wagers. The quoit-ground is generally at the bottom of the lawn, or attached to the subscription bowling-green.

Perhaps I may be allowed, in the absence of other authority, to indicate what the rules should be. First of all in importance is the law that no quoit which does not stick in the ground should count, unless it is prevented by striking another quoit. This rule is not acknowledged generally, I know. If it were, it would deal with all sorts of unskilful throws; for it may be depended upon that there is something radically wrong when, if the ground is in proper condition, a quoit bounces out and rolls away. 'Rollers' and 'flopplers,' and, in a lesser degree, 'wabblers' all do this, and they are all unskilful. A 'floppler' is very ugly. The disc being loosed at an improper altitude, before the edge points sufficiently upwards, it flies to a great height, and comes down quite flat. The force of the concussion, when it reaches the ground, throws it up again, and it may leap close to the stake. If the concave side is downwards it will not count, but if it is uppermost it will, and

very often does so, to the prejudice of quoits thrown much more correctly and nearer. Ought it to count at all? Certainly not; for, from first to last, it was an offence against all the rules of art. On 'lively' ground, as the cricketers say, I have seen a quoit so thrown jump five or six yards. To insist upon counting such a quoit is to me a sure evidence of an indifferent player.

The 'roller' is also defective, but not so bad. The properly thrown quoit maintains its parallel the whole distance: but if, in the act of loosing it, it is turned to the left or right—that is, one side raised higher than the other—it will strike the ground in that position and will then bounce out and roll spirally, very often ending by settling down close to the stake. The rule in this case evidently ought to be to take the quoit to the place where it struck the ground, place it in the cut made, and pressing the lip down, let it be measured therefrom—that is the only equitable law. The same law would meet all cases where the ground is too hard for the disc to enter deep enough to be held. In such a case I always throw well over the stake, because it leaps out, and when the leap is from the back of the stake, it is a positive gain, while from the front it is an equally positive loss.

The 'wabbler' is often a better-thrown quoit than the 'roller,' yet it is far less graceful to watch. It generally makes a sadly erratic course, but often comes to a good ending nevertheless. Having this article and this very paragraph in view, I endeavoured, the last time I played quoits, to throw a 'wabbler,' in order to ascertain the cause. I found it difficult, gave it up in despair, and went on with the game. The very best players sometimes throw 'wabblers.' They look shocking, like an unsteady pigeon—a 'tumbler,' that wants to make a summersault in the air, and finds its courage fail at every attempt. After giving up the endeavour, I threw a 'wabbler,' without meaning it. My quoit was just raised, and at the moment when I was about to loose it I saw that it was leaning to the right hand, and would probably be a roller. I jerked

my hand to the left—away it went, an eyesore, a wretched 'wabbler,' but it entered the ground at a correct angle. That is not often the case: for once a 'wabbler,' it is a 'wabbler' as long as it remains in the air, and usually strikes the ground with an inclination to one side or the other.

I have been theorising. It is such a dear old game—so time-honoured in ancient song, but never in modern prose, that I hope for pardon. Meanwhile, what of the game?

Our game has gone on pleasantly all the while: these remarks about rules might have been made incidental, had not delicacy prevented me from supposing that you, reader, who were my supposititious opponent, would be guilty of throwing 'flopplers,' 'rollers,' or 'wabblers,' which are grave offences in the eyes of all lovers of quoits. We have two 'shots' each from each end. At every throw there is a free backward swing, followed by a forward one that somehow draws the whole body into action, and necessitates a couple of long strides forward that leave the stake free for the next player, who, quoit in hand, stands ready. So the game goes on, with sharp walks from end to end. No player must leave an end until the last quoit is thrown, and when we are getting nearly 'up,' and they are too close for it to be possible to tell who is 'in,' we are pleasantly impatient to be off. There is literally no waiting when only two play, and any more than two is too many. Everybody has a short turn and often. While one is throwing, the other is making ready. Then we walk down, sometimes to find two so nearly equidistant, that the eye fails to tell which is first. Then a string attached to the pin is unfurled, and the point soon settled. This arrangement for measuring is so very simple, that it seems to commend itself to every quoit-player as the natural thing. Yet it is rarely seen, because it is unknown, and the players at every turn go casting about for straws or anything that will do for the admeasurement. Perhaps both are equally near, then neither counts. It would be a good

rule, in such cases, for the second quoits to be adjudged; but there are enough reformations required in quoit laws, without this, which is not very material, being insisted upon.

The game goes on rapidly. Now and then there is a 'ringer,' or one player has 'two in'—that is, both his quoits nearest; and by-and-bye we look at our watches with that peculiar glance which denotes a little anxiety, such as I have seen lurking about expectant faces at railway stations, when a train that is bearing some one dear to the owners has been slightly overdue. We are about to remark that dinner is rather late, when the welcome bell goes, or 'little Willie' runs out with a pleasant summons; and then we go in with wonderful appetites, improved digestions, and a most complete oblivion with regard to the lunch we ate at midday in the City, the Temple, or Strand: for all which we thank our quoits and that 'bit of land' at the back of our friend's suburban house.

## CHAPTER II.

### BOWLS, SUMMER SKATES, AND CHILDREN'S GARDEN GAMES.

Spring is a great enemy to reading. The soft, luxurious perfumes, the west winds, and the sweet sunshine of beautiful May, make men desire to rush away from the little written to the Great unwritten thought. It is not difficult to understand how Wordsworth's Susan saw

Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury  
glide,  
And a river flow on through the vale of  
Cheshire.'

An experience not unlike hers is known to many London men coming down by 'bus in the morning sunshine to the unromantic City. The song of a caged lark or thrush recalls flower gatherings, visions of meadows and woods where the gay daffodils and the frail wind-flowers bloom in clusters: groves where, beneath the trees, are spread

\* Sheets of hyacinth.  
That seem the heavens upbreaking through the  
earth'

and the desire to realize the vision is strong. It is so dull in the City; and the haunts of the kingfisher, where the rivulet glitters in the sunshine, passing between beds of primroses, would be so sweet! What are the cathedrals, palaces, and exchanges to the temples of Nature, where men may taste the subtler inspiration which makes the concert in the wood and every hedge-row vocal! But it can't be done, says stern Necessity; commerce and Lombard Street cannot spare you. The beauty of the morning will not make a susceptible difference in the duties to be gone through at the War Office; Excise and Custom House work must be done, cheques cashed, and the money found for them; entries made; newspaper articles written; tape measured: and, in short, the business of the world does not care a fig for the spring. More's the pity, thinks many a man who would not care to be thought quite so 'sentimental' by his friends and fellows: for 'sentiment' is not 'the thing' in the City just now. For all that he determines to go away home as early as possible, and enjoy the sunshine in his garden. Perhaps he will turn to the work of primitive man—sow a bed of mignonette, and plant dahlias. It is more likely that he will play some garden game: the spring will not let him be idle, and the sunshine will not allow him to linger indoors.

What will he play at? There is such a variety for him to select from: croquet and lawn-billiards, quoits and bowls, and ball games innumerable. Of all aids to sport commend me to balls. For every age, every time, every place we English have a ball-game. We have them in every material, from the crimson that captivates the eye of childhood, up to the ivory of billiards and the ebony of the green bowls.

Bowling on the green is a game for the sage: a philosopher might leave his study to play it. It is simple—but what judgment, what accuracy it requires! what a combination of rights, with never a wrong, has to take place! *Imprimis*, there

is the bias—you observe that the ball, or ‘bowl’ is weighted on one side—to be calculated, then the distance to the jack, the balls that lie in the way, and the plan by which you can circumvent them. Oh, it is a charming game, bowling these black balls over the close green turf! It demands mathematical accuracy to send the ball spinning round and round, nearer and nearer with every circle to the jack, till at last it settles quietly down in its close vicinity; or say it comes in contact with it while it still has motion, and knocks it close up to your opponent’s ball. There is a trial for your temper, after all your calculation and care, only to have aided your adversary to win—that, too, with a splendid ball! Most provoking! But it will happen.

A well-kept garden, with a single pad to walk in, often costs a great deal. I do not refer to the expenditure on gravel, tulips, or gardeners’ labour: I mean, by the indirect expense which it might have been the means of preventing had it been a playground instead of a garden, with a lawn to run upon, bowl hoops, throw balls, use skipping-ropes, erect swings, and play at ‘Tom Tidler’s ground,’ ‘pewit,’ and the always diverting ‘tickle,’ and ‘five holes,’ and all those little nondescript games which make the sum of happiness in child-life, and which are essentially garden games. They are of more importance in this crowded London than a few flowers, for they mean health and strength; and I never see a prettily laid-out little patch of garden, where the children’s feet must never press the edging of box, without some regret, though I am not insensible to the beauty of flowers.

The games I have mentioned have no classical reputation. As games they are so little and insignificant that I feel I have done a bold thing in introducing them here. Their value must be my excuse; and they are, moreover, very charming in their way, as all games must be that make little cheeks glow, eyes sparkle, and faces radiant with pleasure. What a simple thing is a swing, or, as it was called when I

first became acquainted with its giddy pleasure, a ‘swaque.’ Nothing to do but to sit down and go backwards and forwards apparently. A little observation shows that there is more than this—that exertion of a general character is required to keep up the motion, and that it demands vigorous and brisk work, especially for the arms and legs.

Summer skates are now adjuncts to sport. On a lawn they are capital, and give a new charm to ‘tickle.’ The supposition that they are useful in learning real skating is a nonsensical one, and they do not need such a fictitious claim to make them popular. The invention is not a new one. A Swiss, half a century or more ago, made house skates, having ‘quatre petits roues, et ne pouvaient être employé que dans les chemins bien unis.’ But they have only lately become popular in England. The four little wheels revolve beautifully on turf, and some ingenious turns may be made in them, and some still more ingenious falls, at which, as it is only on soft turf, and not hard ice, we can afford to laugh; and Miss Ada—when she is quite sure that only an inch or two of delicate ankle has been displayed—can arise and join in the merriment, and skate away again—

‘And wind about, and in and out,  
like a sweet little brook flashing in  
the sunlight.

‘Les grâces’ is another ladies’ garden game. It is rather insipid, but since it has power to induce them to leave ‘tatting,’ and the fashionable ‘decalcomanie,’ and book-illuminating, I will hold my peace concerning it, and leave them to throw their silken hoops from their lance wands and catch them as they descend again. I cannot see any peculiar grace in the pose which the pastime requires—but perhaps the fault is mine.

Archery does not come within the category of garden games, except the now nearly obsolete cross-bow shooting. Were it otherwise—had ladies grounds in which they could practise when they chose, the art of Robin Hood would soon be wonderfully popular, and Mrs. Horniblow would have to look to her laurels:

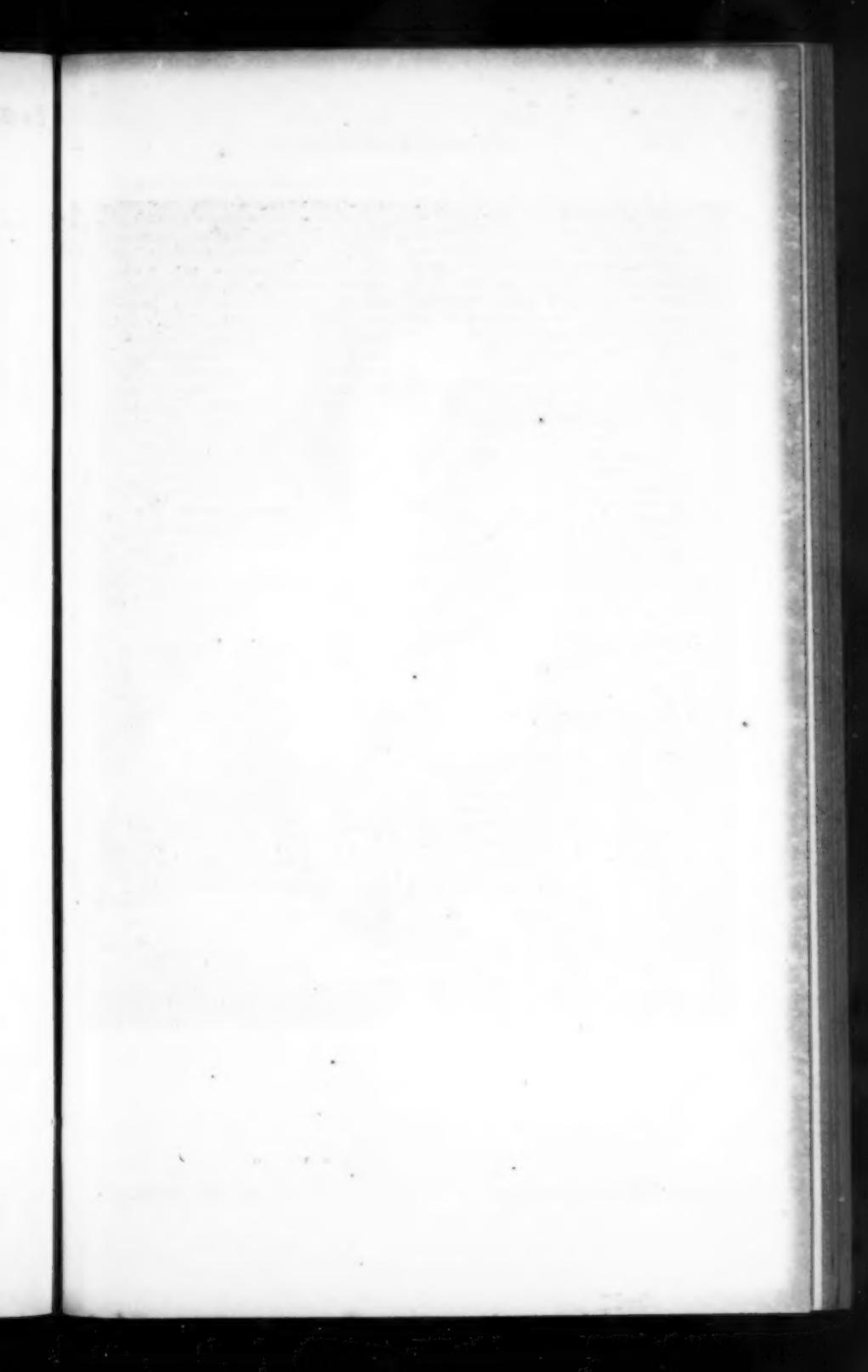
for archery is the one solitary sport at which ladies are allowed to compete in public for prizes, and at which their skill comes into direct comparison with that of the gentlemen—and they are determined to be content with no indifferent place in the race; but there is always this difficulty of the ground, which requires to be long to be of service—far longer than lawns in gardens are.

Of other garden games—and there are many—it is needless to speak: the want is rather in the gardens than in the games. This wonderfully serious capital of ours is too intent upon business to take much heed of playgrounds. There are the parks—but who can get to them? how can girls go there to skip and bowl their hoops? In the streets they are forbidden; yet children

will, despite Sir Richard Mayne and his knights, skip, and trundle hoops; boys will play tip-cat and leap-frog; and at this time there is an enormous rage for the recently well-nigh obsolete whipping-tops; and I have only to look from my window into the 'quiet street' in which I live to see a host being zealously lashed by boys and girls belonging to widely-separated grades of London society; for the stockingless, bonnetless girls and ill-clad street boys know that it is a 'quiet street,' and dispute the pavement inch by inch with the respectable children who, lacking a garden for their games, come out to play them on the smooth flag-stones. Surely every genial-hearted rate-payer enjoys a secret chuckle when he sees any one of the crew make game of the 'bobby.'

J. D. C.







#### THE INNER LIFE.

"Thoughts of mine, so wildly pressing  
Through the mystery of my soul,  
While my calm face, unconfessing,  
Keeps the solemn secret whole.  
Oft I ponder,  
With vague wonder,  
Whence ye come—and what ye mean;  
Visions of my world unseen!"

From the Painting by Louis Desanges.

See "The Undercurrent."

# LONDON SOCIETY.

JUNE, 1864.

HOW THEY GOT UP A COMPANY.



SOME national follies have a certain periodicity. You may expect to see them again about every twenty years—after an interval just long enough to allow some full-

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grown children who have been their slaves to forget the smart, and others to grow up who have not dread the firs.

Just such a periodical folly is